



AN  
ANSWER  
TO THE  
*Right Hon. P. Duigenan's*  
TWO GREAT ARGUMENTS,  
AGAINST THE  
FULL ENFRANCHISEMENT  
OF THE  
*IRISH ROMAN CATHOLICS.*

By a Member of the Establishment.

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Be to their Faults a little blind,  
Be to their Virtues ever kind,  
Let all their Ways be unconfin'd,  
And clap your Padlock on their Mind.

ALTERED FROM PRIOR.

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THE Writer of the following pages, perhaps, owes an apology to the Right Honourable Gentleman whose name he has taken the liberty of placing on his title page, and often afterward referring to, for confining his remarks to two paragraphs alone, without adverting to any other part of the work in which those passages are found. The Writer can only hope, that if at first view, any doubt could arise respecting the propriety of thus seeming to animadvert upon a part, without attending to the whole, that doubt will be removed, by the perfectly abstract manner, in which the two topics have been treated.

The writer owes it to himself to declare explicitly, that Democratic and Irreligious Liberty are, at all times and under whatever form, the objects of his cordial detestation. But there is a CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY, which he acknowledges, it is his wish to feel, and his ambition to exemplify.

He fears, he has reason to ask pardon of his readers for adding so many pages of diffuse and too hastily written notes. He can

only say, that he meant to admit nothing which did not seem to him more or less necessary to the full elucidation of the subject.

As however, the various matters to which he has been led to advert, cannot be alike interesting to all, he begs leave to suggest, that the former part be read over first without interruption. A slight recurrence to the passages marked in the margin will be sufficient afterward, to make the notes intelligible.

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The reader is requested to change with his pen the word "*gave*," in the last line of the 42d page, into "*give*," as this difference of a letter, materially obscures the meaning.



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**D**OCTOR DUIGENAN, in his late publication, has made use of two arguments against the full enfranchisement of our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, on which he appears to place more than common reliance. As both topics admit of being considered independently of the rest of the Doctor's book, it may not be useless to bestow upon them a few minutes close and candid attention.

1st. Dr. D. supposes not only that the Roman Catholics of the British Empire are disqualified by existing laws, but that they are lastingly incapacitated by the immutable principles of the Constitution itself, as established by the Articles of Union between England and Scotland, for any fuller participation of political rights and privileges, than they now possess.

And 2dly, he maintains, that the moral unfitness of Roman Catholics to enjoy or exercise any political privileges in a Protestant state, is equally evident and palpable, in consequence of their acknowledged and universally received belief, that all Protestants, who retain their principles till death, are sure and certain victims of everlasting damnation.

With respect to the first of these two arguments, I am ready to allow that if the premises could be established, the conclusion would be inevitable: if the articles of union had indeed pronounced a sentence of perpetual exclusion against the Roman Catholics, then clearly there would be no alternative, but to maintain that exclusion, or to break up the foundations of our national constitution. I acknowledge fully, that of all compacts made on this earth, that, on which two independent nations give up their respective rights, and form themselves into one political community, is the most sacred and the most important; and to allow that any matter, thus stipulated, can ever after be rescinded, until it becomes obsolete through radical, self-evident, spontaneous change of circumstances, would be virtually to dissolve every tie between nation and nation, of truth, of honour, or of conscience. It is therefore of unquestionable moment, to ascertain what is the true bearing of *the Articles of Union*, upon the question of Roman Catholic Enfranchisement.

Dr. D. truly asserts, that before Roman Catholics can sit in either House of Parliament, the act of the 30th of Char. II. which enjoins on all members of Parliament, the oaths and declaration now taken and subscribed, must be repealed; those oaths, and that declaration being incompatible with the principles of Roman Catholics; and in fact, framed for the very purpose of excluding them.

But it is the Doctor's positive persuasion, that this act *cannot be repealed* ; because he conceives that it is one of the acts of Parliament recognized and perpetuated in the well known act of the 8th of Anne, which was passed in order to be inserted in the articles of Union. The object of this act is to perpetuate the present church establishment in England and Ireland ; and while it recognizes certain acts expressly, it includes, generally, all other acts then in force, which had been passed for the preservation of the church. Dr. D. supposes the 30th of Char. II. to be within this description, and therefore concludes that it is constitutionally immutable.

Doctor D.'s reasoning would be plausible, if it were not overthrown, *in limine*, by a direct and irrefragable fact. The Doctor himself informs us, that the enactment of the 30th of Char. II. is :  
 “ That no member shall sit or vote in either  
 “ house of Parliament, till he hath in presence  
 “ of the house taken the oaths of allegiance, su-  
 “ premacy and abjuration, and repeated and  
 “ subscribed the declaration.”—Such, therefore, is confessedly the sum and substance of the law in question. But the Doctor will scarcely maintain that the law has been made perpetual, if the matter of the law has been expressly left alterable. Let Him turn to the 22d article of the Union with Scotland, and see whether this is not the case ? He will find there, that *the oaths and declaration taken by members of both houses are enjoined on them only, until the parliament of Great Britain shall otherwise direct.*

In the light of this unequivocal provision, what becomes of Dr. D.'s perpetuation of the 30th of Char. II.?

If any reader should be inclined to question whether so learned a lawyer could have been mistaken in so plain a matter, let him take the trouble of consulting the article referred to; and judge whether the right of altering and rescinding the oaths and declaration, at discretion, is not vested in future parliaments, as distinctly as it could be expressed in human language.

Nothing more need be said to prove, that whatever acts of parliament were meant to be included in the general recognition adduced by Dr. D. the act of the 30th of Char. II. thus expressly left alterable, could not be one of them. But another act to which he refers, as being also perpetuated by the same clause of the 8th of Anne, will be found on inquiry to be equally inapplicable to the Doctor's purpose: I mean the act of the 25th of II. Char. usually called the Test Act. That this law was not meant to be perpetuated appears from this fact—that an effort to have it inserted in the 8th of Anne was actually made, on the second reading of that bill in the House of Lords, Feb. 3, 1706, and was resisted by a majority of sixty-three against thirty-three voices. What therefore was explicitly rejected cannot by implication have been adopted. (See the continuation of Rapin.)

The act of the 13th of II Char. commonly called the Corporation Act, is the only remaining act of which Dr. D. makes express mention.

But this law is on several accounts irrelevant to the question. In the first place, it has no reference to sitting in Parliament—Roman Catholics sat in Parliament for several years afterward. In the next place, it was pointed, not at all against Roman Catholics, but wholly against Protestant non-conformists. It disqualifies for the magistracy, or places in bodies corporate, all who *had not* received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the established church, within the twelve months preceding their election. And last of all, this act never existed in Ireland. Even the Test Law had no existence here, until the year 1703, when it was tacked to the penal code by the English privy council, through a hope (which eventually proved vain) of procuring the rejection of the whole in the Irish Parliament. But the corporation law was never (as far as we know) so much as thought of, amongst us; and therefore (whatever may be its existing force in England) it has no manner of relation to the case of *Irish Roman Catholics*.

Thus, even on the slightest examination, all that Dr.D. has imagined, respecting the perpetuity of excluding statutes, falls at once to the ground. But a farther resource is thought to offer itself in the *Coronation Oath*. Let us dispassionately enquire whether this last refuge will prove more tenable?

The Doctor is, doubtless, right in maintaining that the *Coronation Oath*, as now taken, rests not on any mutable law, but on the perpetuated act

(already more than once mentioned) of the 8th of Anne. The less solemn enactment of that oath by a mere statute in the first year of William and Mary, merges, of course, in the more permanent arrangement, by which the same royal pledge became a part of the articles of Union.

But the learned gentleman does not seem to suspect the consequences, that flow from the fact which he has so truly asserted. He is not aware that those, whom he justly regards as the enjoiners of the Coronation Oath as at present taken, (and who, of course are its only authentic interpreters,) have for ever precluded that unkindly construction of it, for which the Doctor, and others who think with him, have been contending. In fact, such a permanently incapacitating force of this oath, as Dr. D. wishes to maintain, would be in direct variance with those two other measures already mentioned ; namely, the reserving to the Parliament of Great Britain, a discretionary right of altering the excluding oaths ; and the actual rejection of the motion, for inserting the 25th of II. Char. in the articles of Union. It is self-evident that an oath enjoined by these legislators, at the same time, and as a part of the same great work, cannot in the nature of things have a flatly contradictory import ; which it would have, were it intended to debar future Parliaments from using the power so explicitly secured to them. If we only suppose the members of that Parliament to have been in their senses, we must conclude, that they could have

no design to close for ever with one hand, what they were so deliberately leaving open with the other.

The *Coronation Oath*, then, explained as alone it can be, by the simultaneous acts of its enjoiners, can never be adduced, with any shadow of rationality, to support the exclusion of Roman Catholics from either house of parliament. But this, I venture to assert, is not the whole of the case. I conceive we are warranted to go much farther, and to say—that the real bearing of this oath is directly the reverse; that instead of obstructing, it facilitates and sanctions the admission of Roman Catholics into Parliament, whenever it shall seem good to the legislature, to adopt such a measure.

The design of the coronation oath was undoubtedly to guard the ecclesiastical constitution of England and Ireland,\* from injury or alteration. But in that latest settlement of the oath which Dr. D. brings before us, who were the enemies of the Church immediately in view? The answer given by all the circumstances of the case is this:—Not so much Roman Catholics as Presbyterian Protestants: and not those out of Parliament, but in Parliament: Presbyterians from North Britain, sitting henceforth, in both Houses.

I say, at that time, not so much Roman Catholics as Presbyterian Protestants. For, be it observed, whatever may have been the feeling of the the State, the church-establishment of the sister-

\* The union Parliament of England, could not include the church of Ireland in any perpetuating act—but they have included it in the *Oath*.

countries entertains no greater jealousy of Roman Catholics than of Protestant dissenters. The object of the Church is to be secured from its enemies of whatever description ; and it has learned from deep experience, that its reformed character does not more expose it to the hostility of Roman Catholics, than its Episcopal character exposes it to the hostility of Presbyterians.

He who is not aware of this impartiality of apprehension in our Establishment, does not know its true character, and would seem not to know its history. It belongs to the Christian Philosopher to enquire, on which of the two quarters the motives for apprehension are most real, or the grounds of dissonance most vital ; but recent facts had proved, that no animosity could be more practical, than that of Presbyterians to an Episcopal church. And therefore the admission of a body of professed Presbyterians, into the Parliament of an Episcopal country, was a measure not to be hazarded, without proportionate fences and securities.

This was the leading principle of the Coronation oath, in its last and most solemn enactment. The jealousy of the Scotch Presbyterians, had in the course of the negotiation, been roused to an apprehension of danger, in the event of a legislative union with England ; and the friends of that measure, anxious to anticipate so powerful an objection, devised the expedient, of an act perpetuating Presbyterianism in Scotland, to be inserted in the articles of Union—and also an oath to be taken, to the same effect, by every succeeding sovereign of Great Bri-



tain at his or her coronation. The zealous friends of the church establishment in England, marked this transaction, and deemed it an example not to be overlooked by them. They conceived that if such a security was looked for against episcopal predominance on one side, a like security against Presbyterian intrigue might be no less necessary on the other. A bill was accordingly brought into the House of Lords, perpetuating the episcopal church of England, enjoining an oath to maintain the Church, as then established in England, Ireland, &c. to be taken by every succeeding sovereign, and making the law thus enacted an immutable condition of the Union. Such was the deep-laid security resorted to alike by each distinct Parliament, against all encroaching power of the United Legislature. And under the guaranty thus afforded, Scotland intrusted itself to the legislation of an episcopal Parliament, and that Parliament ventured to admit Presbyterian associates.

What then is the just construction of the Coronation Oath? Is it a measure of exclusion? Self-evidently the reverse: it is a measure of innoxious admission. It is the chief feature in that contrivance of political sagacity, which an hundred years ago met a difficulty, that might now embarrass, if it had not then been provided for; but which provision now stands ratified by the trial of a century. So far then is this oath from standing in the way of the Roman Catholics, that, together with the other wise arrangements of that memorable period, it answers every objection, which might otherwise have been made to their gratification.

I repeat, and I challenge him that can to disprove my assertion that pugnacious protestantism has never been a characteristic of our episcopal establishment.\* Its Creed has not been derived from either Luther or Calvin; but solely from the sacred scriptures, as interpreted by the ancient Church, and especially by the four first general Councils. Its polemics have been confined (except where Catholic verities were concerned) to temperate self-defence; and that, as much at least against Presbyterian assailants on the one hand, as against Roman Catholic adversaries on the other. Whatever difference the Church of England has made, has been in favour of Roman Catholics. The holy orders conferred in the Roman Catholic Church, being uniformly held authentic; while those of the different protestant communions (from their want of episcopacy) have been as uniformly rejected.

The admission therefore of Scotch Presbyterians to sit in both Houses of Parliament, at the period of the Union, was, to all intents, as questionable a step in the view of the Church, as the admission of Roman Catholics into both Houses can be at this day. The hazard in the former case was not denied; but it was met as it ought. The great national measure was not abandoned; but an expedient was resorted to, for making the interest of the Empire compatible with the safety of the Church Establishment; and what comprehensive wisdom devised, revolving years have sanctioned.

In what manner then does this transaction apply to the present case? It affords a luminous precedent

\* See NOTE 1.

for that measure, which the existing state of things appears to demand; and it furnishes a security against every imaginable hazard. It affords a precedent; because one description of enemies to the national Church having been admitted into Parliament then, another description of enemies (not more dangerous in the eye of the Church) may be equally admitted now: and it furnishes a security; for the self-same provision will hold good here also; there being no conceivable reason why the fences which have availed in the one case, should not be equally effectual in the other.

I humbly trust that these observations will appear conclusive to men of sense and candour.— But if so, how can we enough admire that foresight, which, in an arrangement as unalterable as any act of man could be, has not only kept posterity unembarrassed, but affords, for a peculiarly difficult exigence, as instructive a guidance and as apt a pre-adjustment, as could be imagined within the sphere of human possibility?

Had only that single Act of the 25th of Char. II. been inserted when it was urged, or had those few words in the 22d article of Union, which leave the oaths and declaration at the discretion of Parliament, been omitted, in what a practical dilemma should we at this day have found ourselves? And yet how natural would it have been, after the alarm so lately felt under James II. and in the apprehension of fresh dangers and difficulties from his family, to have seized such an opportunity of paralyzing for ever the domestic partizans of that formidable interest?

In such circumstances, to have acted under the present impulse would have been the most natural thing in the world ; and to think of calculating the remote contingencies of futurity, the most unlikely. How astonishing then was that superiority to present feelings, and that attention to future exigencies, which those men manifested ? I would say, how *mysterious* their anticipation of what was to come ? Can we help believing that the Omniscient Disposer took a part in their counsels, and moulded them into an almost prophetic correspondence to the peculiar demands of this unexampled period ?

I have said that the Union statesmen furnish guidance to us ; for in thus providently securing to posterity, a power of removing impositions then deemed indispensable, did they not express their persuasion that a season might arrive, when such removal would be expedient ? And do they not forcibly instruct us that when that time is clearly indicated by events, the alteration which *it* requires, and *they* have left room for, should be made without hesitation ?

But I have remarked that the measures of that period imply *pre-adjustment* also. I mean, that what was then done, would almost seem intended to provide for the *safety* of those arrangements, the *expediency* of which at one time or other, was so clearly reckoned upon.

Let us only ask—what the dangers are, that the enemies of Roman Catholic enfranchisement most anxiously apprehend ? Are they not that, to which the Church might be liable from the pos-

sible growth of Roman Catholic influence; and that, to which they conceive, even the succession to the Crown might eventually be exposed, in consequence of persons of that persuasion being admitted within the sphere of the legislature?

I appeal, then, to thinking men, whether it is not wonderful, that at the moment in which alone these dangers could be guarded against, they should both be with equal care attended to, and with equal wisdom averted? That the Church Establishment should by one article of the Union, not only be made unalterable for ever, but should be placed under the additional guard of that Royal Oath which no power of the constitution can dispense with? \*—And that another article should no less immutably provide, that any natural heir to the Crown, becoming a Roman Catholic, or marrying a Roman Catholic, should be as incapable of succeeding, as if he or she were naturally dead?

On the whole, could we fancy to ourselves, either a more unequivocal sanction for that measure, which liberal policy now so urgently demands; or a more satisfactory security against every possible bad effect from it, than what we see actually provided for us? Instead, therefore, of any principle of the Constitution, political or ecclesiastical, being hostile to the wished for enfranchisement, are we not invited to this concession, by its clearest voice, and encouraged by its deepest provisions? Can we then withhold this fraternal boon, if we consistently attend to the one; or can we dread its results, if we rationally weigh the other?

\* See NOTE II.

I trust I have fully answered one of Dr. D's principal arguments. I proceed to consider that which the Doctor has drawn from the supposed doctrine of the Roman Catholics respecting *Exclusive Salvation*. That I may do no possible injustice to the Doctor on this subject, I will transcribe his own words. And I readily allow, that if the Doctor's statement corresponded with matter of fact, the Roman Catholics ought not only to be excluded from the privileges of the constitution, but excommunicated from human society.

“ Can any doubt be entertained,” says the Doctor, “ of the unappeasable enmity of the Irish Romish Clergy to their Protestant countrymen, from the very principles of their religion? It is a known fact, acknowledged by the whole Romish sect, that they believe as firmly as any other part of their creed, that the souls of all Protestants, immediately on their departure from their bodies, are plunged into hell, there to suffer eternal torments. This uncharitable doctrine is inculcated into them from their infancy; as may appear from the catechism published by Dr. Butler, titular archbishop of Cashel. No doctrine that ever was broached is productive of more deep-rooted hatred and animosity in the breasts of Irish Romanists, against the Irish Protestants, than this of exclusive salvation. They look upon Irish Protestants as only Estrays from hell, during their continuance on earth, and believe them to be living agents of Satan. The propagation of such a doctrine by the Romish Irish clergy, extinguishes every sen-

“timement of charity and benevolence towards Protestants, in the breast of every Irish Romanist.”

This is a tremendous charge, enough almost to make the hair of a Protestant reader stand on end ; and the manner in which it is made, evinces how deeply he who makes it, is persuaded of its truth. The only question is—has the Doctor given a just representation of the case ; or has he unconsciously over-charged his piece, with colourings derived from prejudice and misconception ?

I wish to inquire into this point with the most dispassionate candour, feeling it, on every account desirable, that we should judge of our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen exactly as they are. I ask then, how are we to ascertain their real sentiments ? Shall we rest on what others affirm concerning them, or shall we hear their approved authors speaking for themselves ? Again, shall we make peremptory conclusions from certain general expressions, which, notwithstanding all their apparent harshness, may have important limitations and softenings, of which superficial readers are not aware ? Or, shall we attend to what they have explicitly pronounced upon the very point itself, for the purpose of explaining the precise doctrine of the church of Rome on this interesting subject ?

I confidently anticipate the wish of every good-natured reader. I earnestly bespeak attention ; and I beg to observe, that I make no elaborate search for information ; I do not go beyond the

authors of whom I have happened myself to be in possession.

I freely acknowledge that Dr. D. may have met with much to countenance his terrible portraiture. There are sentiments, no doubt, to be found in Roman Catholic writers, as shocking as they are irrational; for in whatever church or sect bigotry exists, it will be too likely to vent itself in presumptuous denunciations. But I hope to give proof that the unrelenting severity of a few, is not to be imputed to the many; and that the leading Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland in particular, do not believe, "that Irish Protestants are only estrays from hell during their continuance on earth; or, that the souls of all Protestants, immediately on their departure from their bodies are plunged into hell, there to suffer eternal torments."

It will be allowed, that Dr. Milner is a writer not to be suspected of undue relaxedness. Let us hear then how he addresses a Protestant gentleman, in his "Letters from Ireland;" when the mention of a recent melancholy event in the county of Wexford, led the Doctor to expostulate with his correspondent on the subject of duelling.

"Independently of every other consideration, says he, "remember that *you are a Christian*; that "is to say, a *disciple of Him*, who has made the "forgiveness of injuries the characteristic of "those who belong to Him. By consenting to "a duel, you abjure his gospel in its most essential point; you consent to the murder of "your brother, and to his murdering you, not



“ knowing which of the two events may follow.  
 “ Should you die under the guilt of self-murder,  
 “ (for self-murder it is, when you deliberately go  
 “ out to receive the ball of your adversary) what  
 “ must be your surprize and horror the moment  
 “ after death, when your spirit finds itself in the  
 “ regions of eternity; when it rushes into the pre-  
 “ sence of its tremendous judge uncalled for by  
 “ him, and polluted with the foulest guilt? Oh!  
 “ daring wretch, if God is infinitely just and true,  
 “ you must be everlastingly miserable!” And what  
 “ will it avail you” says Tertullian “ to be ex-  
 “ tolled as a man of honour where you are not,  
 “ and to be tormented where you are?”

In this animated passage, so truly worthy of a  
 Christian divine, is there not as emphatic a recog-  
 nition both of the christianity and the salvability  
 of the party addressed, as if it had been written to  
 one of the Doctor's own flock? Does not every  
 expression in it take for granted, that he who is thus  
 admonished, is within the christian hope, as well as  
 under the christian law; and that he has fully  
 as much to gain or lose by piety or impiety, by  
 obedience or disobedience, as any of his fellow-  
 christians? The strength and warmth of the ex-  
 postulation leave no shadow of doubt of its com-  
 ing directly from the heart of the writer, and con-  
 sequently no evidence could be more decisive,  
 that Dr. Milner did not deem his correspondent to  
 be at all events in a state of damnation.

But it is not merely by implication however clear,  
 that Dr. Milner has informed us of his mind upon

this subject. In a note annexed to one of his letters to Dr. Sturges, he tells us expressly, that he feels himself forced to "make a great difference " between other revealed truths" (such for instance, as relate to the nature and authority of the church) " and those concerning *the fundamental " mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation* " contained in the apostles' creed." And he adds these remarkable words : " There *may be* what " divines call an *invincible ignorance of the former,* " which cannot be admitted with respect to the " latter. For there is no other name under heaven except that of Jesus Christ, given among " men, whereby we must be saved. Acts IV. 12." That the Doctor spoke here, most deliberately, and did not use one word without weighing its import, appears from the short but significant observation which is immediately subjoined. " **THIS**" says he " **IS AN ANSWER TO THE QUERY WHICH DR. " STURGES PROPOSED TO ME, ON THE SUBJECT " OF EXCLUSIVE SALVATION\*.**

I conceive I might trust the decision of the question to this single evidence. Dr. M. is perhaps the ablest and deepest-read Roman Catholic Divine in the British Empire ; and it is notorious that none is more zealous or less complying ; yet in terms the most deliberate and the most digested, he, here, makes everlasting salvation to depend, not on acquiescence in the dogmas of the Roman Catholic church, but on a complete and cordial reception of that Catholic faith, of which our own church is as tenacious as the church of Rome. " There *may be*" says he " *an invincible ignorance*" res-

\* See NOTE III.

pecting those other dogmas ; and consequently we must not make these the standard for judging of the final destiny of men. But they must hold the Catholic Faith ; that is they must worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity. They must believe that the Divine Redeemer is over all, " God blessed for ever." And believing these truths sincerely, they are safe, because *they are Christians* ; however they may unintentionally err, in what relates to the difference between one communion and another.

Such is the plain import of Dr. M's. declaration. The sensible reader will judge from which of the two learned Doctors, Dr. M. or Dr. D. the real sentiment of the Church of Rome may be learned with most authenticity ?

I am glad, however, that we have it in our power to go still more directly, into this very interesting question. A work at this moment lies before me, which largely and learnedly discusses the very point, and probably gives more explicit information on this subject than was afforded in any preceding instance. No one can imagine that this book was written for the present emergency, as it is the republication of what has been in print for above seventy years. And the character of the writer during that period, (who on every occasion has been referred to, as one of the most celebrated champions of the Roman Catholic cause), places the authority of the work beyond the possibility of doubt. Its republication therefore, at this time, may

fairly be considered as the most unexceptionable species of *Exposè*, that could have been resorted to by sober minded Roman Catholics, for their own justification, and our satisfaction. In the list of subscribers, are two Archiepiscopal and five Episcopal names. And amongst the latter, it is not to be overlooked, that the aimable and venerable Doctor Moylan gives his special sanction to the work by subscribing for fifty copies.

The tract is entitled CHARITY AND TRUTH, or *Catholics not uncharitable in saying, that none are saved out of the Catholic Church*. Its author was a Doctor Edward Hawarden, who died seventy-four years ago ; and who distinguished himself in his day, both by his labours in defence of the Roman Catholic church, and by his zealous and learned support of the Catholic verities against Arians and Socinians. His firm attachment to the tenets of the Roman Catholic religion appears in every page of his writings ; and therefore the charitable concessions in the treatise now referred to, cannot be resolved into any laxity of belief, or deficiency of zeal. The title of his work, is in fact, most strictly significant of the idea which prevailed in his mind. It clearly combines what the author deemed to be *Truth*, with what every man on earth must allow to be *Charity*.

He begins his work with a distinction, which the language of one of our own best known formularies may help us to understand. "It may," says "Dr. H. be generally true, though not universally *and without exception*, that none are saved out of the Catholic Communion."

If these words should seem to have a formidable aspect, be it remembered, that we in our Catechism, say in exactly similar terms; that the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are "*generally necessary* to salvation." Do we then in teaching these words to our children, mean to impress them with the idea that children of Anabaptists, and Quakers of all ages, are "only Estrays" "from hell, and living agents of Satan"? Most assuredly not. "Our Church" says Archbishop Secker "very charitably teaches us not to look upon the sacraments as *indispensably*, but as "*generally necessary* ; out of which general necessity, we are to except those particular cases where believers either have not the means of performing their duty in this respect, or are innocently ignorant of it, or even excusably mistaken about it."

It is precisely in this way, only in somewhat more cautious language, that Hawarden elucidates the distinction which has just been mentioned. "It is" says he "*generally* true, but *not without exception*, that none are saved without baptism. This, I say, is a *general* not a *universal* rule. For 1st, we must except the martyrs who had not an opportunity of being christened. 2dly, we must except the catechumens and others, who having a true love of God above all things, and a desire of baptism, died before that sacrament could be administered to them. 3dly, We must except those true lovers of God, who by an innocent and involuntary

“mistake, think they were christened in their  
 “infancy, though indeed they were not; for  
 “these may be saved without ever receiving bap-  
 “tism in effect. Lastly, *those may also, pro-*  
 “*bably, be excepted who have an invincible*  
 “*ignorance, that Christians are commanded to*  
 “*be baptized.*” I need scarcely observe, that  
 the more general expressions of Secker could not  
 be more fairly paraphrased than in this passage;  
 the cases recognized in Hawarden’s two latter  
 instances being exactly those which were in the  
 Archbishop’s view.

Dr. Hawarden having thus explained himself  
 on the particular point of Baptism, proceeds to  
 apply his reasoning to the general subject. “Bap-  
 “tism,” says he, “and Catholic Communion are  
 “duties equally necessary to salvation. No one  
 “can be saved who *chuses* to die without baptism,  
 “*unless he have invincible ignorance* either, of his  
 “being unbaptized, or *of the necessity of bap-*  
 “*tism*: and no one can be saved who *chuses* to  
 “die out of the Catholic communion, unless *he*  
 “*be invincibly ignorant of the necessity* which  
 “all men have of being joined to it.”

Let the reader pronounce whether, on a fair  
 comparison of the above passages, (of that from  
 Archbishop Secker, and those two latter passages  
 from Dr. Hawarden) it is not clear beyond need  
 of reasoning, that the liberality by which our  
 worthy prelate reconciles us to the seemingly ri-  
 gid language of our establishment, respecting the  
 general necessity of the two sacraments, is in

strictest sameness of substance, manifested by Dr. H. in his mode of explaining the similar necessity of Catholic communion? If, therefore we are satisfied with that kindly interpretation, by which our own Church is justified in the one case, how, in common consistency, shall we reject the charitable construction, which Dr. H. gives to the sentiment of the Roman Catholic church in the other case?

In the spirit of Christian charity, but at the same time with the strictest regard to every catholic truth, Dr. H. answers the query—"Is every one saved who lives well?"—"Living well," says he, may be understood two different ways. "1st, "In regard only to moral honesty. And 2d, to all "other Christian duties necessary to salvation, "of what kind soever they be; whether they "have an immediate relation to God, to our "neighbour, or to ourselves.

"In this latter sense of the word, whoever lives "well, is saved; nay, though a person has lived "ill, if he repents as he ought, and afterwards ob- "serves till death all duties necessary to salva- "tion, he is undoubtedly saved. For one of these "duties is, to love God above all things; and "how can this love and damnation be con- "sistent?"

Need I call the reader's attention to this last, admirable sentiment? Had this concluding sentence been wanting, doubtless, the rest would have been equivocal; because "*all duties*" might be supposed to imply, sooner or later, an

actual communion with the Roman Catholic church. But every such narrow idea is nobly precluded, by making "*the love of God above all things*," an infallible title to heaven. To acknowledge the independent and paramount efficacy of this purest and inmost essence of all true piety and virtue, is to assert a free entrance into God's mystical temple, for every one who approaches it in sincerity; it is to leave no real wall of partition in the way of any one, who worships the Eternal Father in spirit and in truth.

And yet (for it is still necessary to keep this fact in view) it is a true Roman Catholic who is exercising this liberality. In every merciful concession, there is the same reconciling supposition—that of invincible ignorance. It will consequently be of importance to know precisely what idea Dr. H. would wish us to annex to this significant term.

He puts this question:—"What must we conclude of those who have the misfortune to be bred up in heresy or schism without knowing it?"

The answer is as follows:—"Their ignorance is invincible, if they *sincerely use their best endeavours to know the whole compass of their duty*, and would both faithfully and immediately comply with the most difficult parts of it when known, how contrary soever they may be, to their passions, to their prejudices, to the conveniences of life, to their interest in



“ this world, and to the expectation of their  
“ friends.”

Than this what can be more reasonable, and consequently what more charitable? Those, of whatever persuasion, who do not come up to this standard, are either dishonest, or negligent, in the greatest of all concerns; and therefore, most assuredly have no title to stand within the Doctor's circle of charity. But this is their fault, not his. His definition is irrefragable in point of truth, while without conceding a particle of what Dr. H. was bound to maintain, it comprehends within its merciful embrace, every sincere practical Christian, whatever be his external connexion. To every such individual the Doctor's rule of judging will extend, not only in its own nature, but in his express intention.

The next question comes directly to the point, and receives as direct an answer.

“ Does invincible ignorance excuse men from  
“ the guilt of heresy and schism? It does,” says  
Dr. H. if it be really invincible.

“ For as nothing but guilt can exclude a man  
“ from heaven, so nothing but a wilful violation of  
“ his duty can make him guilty. And if his se-  
“ paration from the Catholic Church by here-  
“ sy or schism, proceed from an invincible  
“ mistake, or from invincible ignorance, how is it  
“ sinful?

“ Heresy is a wilful error against faith; schism  
“ is a wilful separation from the Catholic Com-

“ munion. And if this separation, this error be  
 “ involuntary, how can it be sinful, how can  
 “ it be criminal?

“ It is a rule beyond contradiction, that no  
 “ one sins in what he cannot avoid. How then  
 “ can a man sin by not knowing what it is not  
 “ in his power to know, or of what he has invinci-  
 “ ble ignorance? For though voluntary igno-  
 “ rance may be justly blamed, an involuntary  
 “ mistake cannot.

“ St. Augustin himself observes, that invinci-  
 “ ble ignorance may excuse a man from he-  
 “ resy.”

I have given this passage at large, that every candid Protestant may judge of it for himself. I need scarcely remark, that in order to understand its clear amount, it must be considered in connexion with the immediately foregoing quotation. That establishes the errors of every truly good man to be *invincible*; and this latter passage asserts *invincible error*, even though it should occasion apparent heresy or schism, to imply neither guilt nor criminality. The consequence is inevitable—that according to Doctor H. they who in appearance are heretics or schismatics, may in reality be good men; of course objects of God’s favour here, and heirs hereafter of his everlasting promises.

The concluding sentence in this last quotation deserves special attention. Doctor H. says, “ St. Augustin *himself* observes, &c.” As if this Fa-

ther were the very model and architype of severity—as if in the Doctor's own opinion he had gone farther in rigidness than a gentle mind could keep pace with ; and yet still, on this interesting point, was on the side of charity. Who does not perceive in this mode of expression, that Dr. H. was even zealous for liberality, and that he secretly rejoiced in having St. Augustin to support him ? To prove that he was founded in his assertion, he quotes a passage from this celebrated father, which contains in substance, all that the Doctor had been pleading for : literally translated it is as follows :

“ The apostle has, doubtless, said, *a man who is an heretic avoid.*” But, if they who hold “ an opinion in itself false and perverse, maintain it with no pertinacious animosity, especially if they have not been misled by “ their own presumptuous audacity, but have “ received their error from seduced or lapsed “ parents ; if they are serious and diligent “ enquirers after truth, and manifest a disposition to yield to it when found by them, “ such persons, are on no account, to be set down “ as heretics.”\*

Than this passage, nothing, certainly, could be more to Dr. H.'s benevolent purpose, nor can any thing be more in point to what I am wishing to establish. According then to St. Augustin, the essence of heresy consists (exactly as Dr H. has stated) not in external circumstances, but in

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\* See Note IV.

an internal temper, in factious turbulence, and impassioned animosity. Where these are not, and where love of truth in general, so manifests itself as to evince, that if it is rejected in any particular instance, mere mental error not moral pravity, is the cause ; in such cases, the name of Heretic is not to be bestowed ; nor even the idea to be admitted :—*Nequaquam sunt inter hæreticos deputandi.*

The learned reader need scarcely be informed, that to know assuredly what St. Augustin maintained, is in almost every instance to know the settled doctrine of the Roman Catholic church. It is a well-known fact, that to no other individual Father is the same authority allowed, nor have the sentiments of any other been investigated with equal minuteness. On most questions, therefore, his decision may be held conclusive. But on this point above all others ; because no Father of the Church was more experimentally acquainted with the subject. His own continued contests with the Donatists, gave him the fullest opportunity of knowing both the worst and the best of what was deemed an heretical community.

St. Augustin has accordingly in matters of this nature been regarded as a sort of polar star. I have, in a small French treatise now lying before me, an instance of this, so pertinent to my purpose, that I cannot but insert a translation of the passage. The tract was published in London, in the year 1792. It is entitled, “ *Defence de L’Ordre Social ;*” its author, an emigrant

*Vicaire General.* In vindicating the Roman Catholic church, against the charge of undue intolerance, he expresses himself as follows :—

“ Religion does not enjoin the belief, that we  
 “ are living in society with *the damned*. In  
 “ teaching us to judge of *doctrines*, she forbids  
 “ us to judge persons, she commands us not on-  
 “ ly to desire, but to hope for the salvation of our  
 “ brethren; to adore the judgments of God in  
 “ them that perish, and to believe that *none shall*  
 “ *be punished for invincible errors*. The Catho-  
 “ lic religion does teach us, that out of the church  
 “ there is no salvation; but it also instructs us *that*  
 “ *those may belong to the church who are not in*  
 “ *its external communion*. All the Theologians  
 “ acknowledge, *in concurrence with St. Augustin,*  
 “ that the church has its concealed children in  
 “ the sects separate from its unity.”\*

I should think I had adduced sufficient evidence to refute Dr. Duigenan's charge, were it not that one other passage in Dr. Hawarden's book appears to merit peculiar attention. It is of a more strictly theological cast than any of the preceding passages; and may therefore require closer consideration, in order to its being fully understood; at the same time, it contains a principle of charitable embracement so expressly comprehensive, and so plainly practical, as at once to authenticate and simplify all that has been already brought forward upon the subject.

It is probably seldom adverted to by Protestants, that, however rigid the Latin church may

\* See Note V.

have appeared in matters of doctrine and discipline, in one particular, namely, the efficacy of the Sacrament of Baptism, it has been the zealous maintainer of an unbounded liberality. The rebaptizing of those who had received baptism in sects deemed heretical, was strenuously insisted on in the third century, by St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, a luminary of the church, whose name to this day calls forth universal veneration. This proposition, notwithstanding the respectable quarter from whence it came, was as strenuously resisted by Stephen, bishop of Rome; who opposed to the plausible theory of the pious, but in this instance, mistaken Cyprian, the prevalent practice of the church universal. The two bishops persisted in their respective opinions without breach of Catholic Communion; but the sentiment of Stephen, was at length recognized by all; and it became a matter settled beyond dispute, that baptism, if administered as our Saviour directed, that is, in the name of *the ever blessed Trinity*, is to be deemed valid, by whomsoever it has been administered.

I conceive we of latter times, owe much to this providential decision. Had the question been otherwise determined, the situation of western Europe, during the three last centuries, would have been calamitous beyond expression. The Roman Catholic church, and the Reformed Communions, would have been to each other as pagans or atheists; and all that Dr. Duigenan so dismally imagines, would have been in that case

dreadful and desperate reality. But the *Unity* of BAPTISM has secured, in spite of outward dissonance, the bland and blessed feeling of a common Christianity. In virtue of this indissoluble link, we are still by mutual acknowledgement, not only children of the same eternal Father, but disciples (however in each other's estimation unfaithful or unworthy) of the same Divine Redeemer. And from this kindly source have proceeded (and in the nature of things could not but proceed) all those corrective and assuasive sentiments, of which I have been giving brief, but I trust satisfactory specimens.

It is, accordingly, in adverting to the subject of BAPTISM, that Dr. Hawarden expresses more emphatically than on any other occasion, the extent of his charitable calculations. The possibility of virtual communion with the Catholic Church, in a state of conscientious separation from its external pale, he has been every where asserting ; but chiefly in the instance to which I now refer, does he shew, beyond possibility of cavil, that the sphere of his charity is as ample, as the sentiment is luminous.

“ Every one” says Dr. H. “ who was truly baptized in his infancy, by what minister, or in what congregation soever, was once a member of the Catholic Church.”

“ The justifying Grace which was given in Baptism cannot be lost, but only by the guilt of mortal sin.” Therefore “ all persons who retain to their death, at what age soever it happens, the justifying Grace, which they received in their

“ baptism, are certainly saved ; tho’ by invincible  
 “ ignorance, they positively refuse to be Catho-  
 “ lics.”

“ These were always living members of the  
 “ Catholic Church ; and were always in the sight  
 “ of God, tho’ they did not know it, part of the  
 “ Catholic Communion. Nay, though they had  
 “ lost by other sins, their baptismal Grace ; yet,  
 “ *as long as they are not guilty of any mortal sin*  
 “ *against Faith*, they are actually a part of the  
 “ Catholic Church ; and in the sight of God, are  
 “ actually, tho’ neither they, nor we, know it in  
 “ particular, in the Catholic Communion,”

It is to this last sentence that I wish to call attention. The admission, that those who commit no deadly sin whatever, after Baptism, are, in the divine estimation, of the Catholic Church, would in the present state of the Christian world afford little satisfaction. “ *Paucissimi sunt tantæ felicitatis, ut ab ipsâ ineunte adolescentiâ nulla damnabilia peccata committant :*”—said St. Augustin. And we of this day have to lament that the case is not bettered ; the instances “ of so great  
 “ a felicity” being too probably as rare as ever. But Dr. H’s distinction between practical departures from baptismal Grace, and deadly sins *against FAITH*, presents a principle of explicit and enlarged liberality. For if they alone forfeit the Catholicity derived to them from their Baptism, who in Dr. H’s sense *sin mortally against FAITH*, then, all who retain the *integrity of Christian Belief*, retain also their virtual place in the Catholic



Church. In other words, all who deserve to be accounted CHRISTIANS are in God's merciful reckoning held to be CATHOLICS.

That this is strictly and literally Dr. H's meaning, appears from the explanation of *Mortal Sin against Faith*, which he has immediately subjoined ; and which is meant to preclude every possible misconception, whether on the side of laxity or of severity.

It is asked, in consequence of the above admission, whether all persons " who were baptized in " their infancy" and remain invincibly ignorant of the Catholic Church, are not, of course, in the Catholic Communion ?

Dr. H. answers " No, they are not ; for though " they were always invincibly ignorant of the " Catholic Church, they may yet have committed " many great sins *against Faith*. As first, by doubting of the *Trinity*, of the *Incarnation*, of the " *Resurrection*, or any article of Faith which they " hold in common with the Catholic Church. " Secondly, by denying the truth of any of these " articles. Thirdly, by doubting without sufficient " reason of those very points, which by an invincible error, they had supposed to be revealed ; for " rashness is always a sin."

I have transcribed this passage with exactness, that no possible room might be left for questioning its import. I appeal to every mind capable of judging, whether we can resist the conclusion, that, in Dr. H's view, to be a true Believer in Christianity, is to be also, virtually and essentially, a true

Catholic ; and that the circle of salvability is strictly commensurate with that of soundness in Christian Faith, and sincerity in Christian practice ?

I fear too many readers will be but little pleased with so much theology ; but I beg them to consider, that thus only could the way be cleared, for a free exercise of ingenuous charity. We could not love the Roman Catholics as fellow Christians, or as fellow creatures, if we were persuaded that they only regarded us as “ Estrays “ from hell, and living agents of Satan.” And this charge, when actually made, could only be answered by such evidences as I have now offered.

If it should be said, that these are only the opinions of a few more liberal individuals, and that therefore they are insufficient to refute the general charge ; I answer, 1st. that Roman Catholic individuals, are not in the habit (like too many protestant individuals,) of shaping their creed after the model of their fancy ; but on such points especially, as those now before us, account themselves obliged to maintain no private opinion, which is not strictly consistent with the acknowledged doctrine of the Church. I observe 2dly. that the individuals I adduce, are not merely Dr. Milner and Dr. Hawarden (conclusive as either of them might be justly deemed) but *St. Augustin* also, (as quoted by Dr. H.) than whom, no authority below that of a General Council, could be more decisive : besides, in quoting Dr. H. I virtually adduce all who for nearly a century have been approving of his works ; and especially those Arch-

bishops, Bishops, and Priests, who in republishing the treatise from which I quote, have given their strongest sanction to the doctrines which it teaches. I add, 3dly. that I could at this moment lengthen my statement by farther quotations from works of prime authority, did I not conceive that I have already given more than enough to tire the indolent reader, and satisfy the candid.

For example, I could transcribe a digested view of the received sentiment of the Roman Catholic Church on this subject, from the *Théologie* in the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, in which, under the head of *Hérésie*, every thing is admitted, which Dr. Hawarden has asserted. In particular, the passage which Dr. H. quotes from St. Augustin is given, with four other passages of a like import; and to them is added, the authority of *St Fulgentius*, of *Salvian*, and of the more modern but not less celebrated *Nicole*. I will give the words of this last mentioned writer, which are as decisive as they are compendious; and they come from as learned a Divine and as true a Saint, as the Christian Church has produced in these latter ages. “*Tous ceux qui n'ont point participé par leur volonté et avec connoissance de cause, au schisme, et à l'hérésie sont partie, de la véritable Eglise.*”

It may be asked, to whom, then, are the severe denunciations, which may possibly be found, in Dr. Butler's Catechism,\* and which we know occur in other books of popular instruction, to be applied?

\* See NOTE VI.

I answer, in their obvious intention they are applicable to those alone, who either give themselves no concern, whether they are right or wrong; or who, believing themselves to be right, desert that rectitude, or believing themselves to be wrong, persevere in that faultiness, from some secular or selfish motive. These exclusively are the persons meant to be anathematized. But as man can rarely ascertain such cases the exercise of charity is enjoined, and judgment is committed to the searcher of hearts.

On the other hand, all believers in the Christian Doctrine, who sincerely value truth, and act as they do, because after fair enquiry, they honestly deem themselves to be right, these, if out of visible communion with the Roman Catholic Church, constitute the cases of *invincible error* or *invincible ignorance*, upon which Dr. Hawarden has enlarged; and in the settled judgment of that Church, are its genuine though unknown children.

On the whole, the Roman Catholic Church is, inflexibly severe, where it judges itself obliged to exercise severity:—that is, it denounces strictly and without abatement, all who violate or neglect, what they themselves believe, or even suspect to be their duty. But it stops here, and leaves all individual cases beyond this line, to the tender mercy, or unerring judgment of Almighty God. It questions not, on the contrary, it expressly acknowledges that beyond its own visible pale, the grace of God operates, and may operate effectually; and that this may particularly be reckoned upon,

where persons have been *born* in a separate communion ; and where there has been no departure from those *Catholic Verities*, which the Church of Rome, in unison with the ancient Church, maintains to be necessary, not only as *conditions*, but as *instrumental means* of salvation.

Such, on the evidence adduced, I conclude the settled judgment of the Roman Catholic Church to be, every where, and not least in Ireland ; and I appeal to every dispassionate Protestant, whether there is any thing in the sentiment thus ascertained, to justify those charges which have been so confidently exhibited, and so implicitly received ? I ask particularly, what is there in this belief, necessarily to produce animosity or even coldness between the holders of it, and true members of our Established Church. In as much as these realize every condition, and meet every point, on which the Roman Catholic doctors have declared the fullest exercise of charitable judgment to be warranted.

To this last particular, I should be happy to call deep and general attention. If the Roman Catholics are constitutionally admissible to a community of political privileges, (as I trust has been shewn ;) and if they are not, by any sentiment which they actually hold, incapacitated in a moral view, for such admission, (as I hope has been also established ;) then would I ask, where, or in what circumstances could such a conciliatory measure be adopted, under equal urgency of persuasive

motives, or in equal hope of the most desirable consequences ?

In no other situation upon earth, have Christians of the two descriptions; reformed and unreformed, such ample opportunity of mutually injuring or benefiting each other. Thrown together by the resistless hand of Providence, into the closest neighbourhood, mingling continually in the daily intercourse of life, and each description possessing enough of national weight, to be beyond all effectual controul of the other, their mutual friendship or their mutual hostility must ever be the richest blessing, or the most direful calamity to their common country. If there be then any rational prospect of realizing and maintaining mutual good understanding, can we answer it to God or to our country, to posterity or to the world, to persevere in that repulsive and exclusive course, which while human nature remains as it is, can yield no other fruit than jealousy, dissention, and implacable animosity ?

That the most rational prospect of mutual good understanding is afforded us, in the existence and diffusion of such sentiments as I have been transcribing, I cannot see ground to question. The root of animosity is substantially extracted so soon as the possibility of Divine favour and eternal salvation is admitted. From that moment, the more benignant tendencies of human nature are at liberty to shew themselves ; and Christian Charity exults in the conscious possession of so much more ample a sphere. Such, I conceive, is the

result to be looked forward to, from the sentiments which Dr. Hawarden and his republishers have been putting into circulation ; if their efficacy be not checked, nor their progress impeded, by a continuance of civil or political exasperation.

It is the part of a true philosopher to discover effects in their causes, as well as causes in their effects. Let the truly philosophical mind search the point now before us to the bottom, and see whether *salvability* being once clearly admitted, any thing but perseverance in repulsion can prevent the growth of unsuspecting intercourse, and unvitiated confidence ?

But this, however important and incontrovertible, is no more than a general truth, which might hold equally good, wherever Roman Catholics and Protestants were mingled together in society. I wish to direct attention to the additional security for those happy results which the special character of our own Church Establishment affords to us. I have asked, not only, “ where could conciliatory measures” be resorted to, “ under equal urgency of persuasive motives ;” but also, “ in what circumstances could” they “ be adopted in equal hope of the most desirable consequences ?” What I mean to impress is, that as in no country under Heaven, mutual good understanding between the two religious descriptions can be more necessary, so in no other instance, could the members of a reformed Church cultivate that good understanding, with so little embarrassment, or with such fulness of expectation.

If peace be better than animosity among fellow-countrymen, if mutual respect and kindness be better than mutual jealousy and execration between fellow-christians, let us not, circumstanced as we are by the high destiny of Heaven, shut our eyes against the peculiar aptitude to those happier dispositions with which, not our wisdom, nor our virtue, but God's inscrutable, because distinguishing, mercy, has enriched us.

Far be it from my thoughts to depreciate the advantages which the *reformed* character of our Church implies; when rightly used, I feel them to be invaluable. But, they are, for the most part, *negative* advantages; they may serve greatly to enhance whatever positive advantages we possess; but they have added little to our possessions. These have been derived to us from a far higher source. We claim in common with other Reformed Communions, as much liberty as we deem necessary to make our worship of the Eternal Father, a "reasonable service." But in making this claim, we, perhaps, alone of the whole reformed body, have felt that we had much to preserve, as well as somewhat to acquire. And through this heaven-inspired caution, we trust our Church is still essentially catholic and apostolical; catholic, in our unchanged creeds and and substantially retained formularies; and apostolical in an episcopacy, which in Ireland (I rejoice to remark) has no need of being justified, even against a fabulous impeachment.\*

\* See NOTE VII.



But if such are our advantages above all the rest of the reformed body, if such are our positive possessions, without which the mere liberties of our Church might be our snare and our perdition, let us ask—in common with whom, do we hold these advantages and these possessions ; and through whose transmissive agency have we received this inheritance ? We ought to ascertain our degree of relationship to the Roman Catholic Church, before we resolve to continue unkind to its children. We should reflect, whether having been the instruments of so much good to us, we ought not to make them, in some measure, our depositaries, in discharging our debt of gratitude to Heaven.

We often make comparisons between our public liturgy and that of other reformed communions ; and we feel an honest triumph in our own superiority. But to what do we chiefly owe that modest beauty and “mild majesty”\* with which the virtuous are ever edified, and the thoughtless not seldom impressed ? We owe it to this, that our reformers availed themselves of the devotional treasures which they possessed, and did not, like other portions of the Reformed Body, contract a rage for novelty. In other words we owe it to this, that our reformers were not infected with that anti-catholic mania which inspired so many of that day, with a distaste for all that was graceful, or dignified, or venerable. With us, and us alone, the contagion was resisted ; and therefore, with us alone, has Christianity neither been maimed nor disfigured, nor denuded by reformation. Our

\* Burke.

faith is entire, because we changed no creed ; our public worship is food to our souls and recreation to our minds, because we retained what had fed and refreshed the Christian Church through successive ages.

Shall we then, who owe our distinction among the mass of the reformed, to our receding less than any other reformed communion from the Roman Catholic Church, repay that invaluable advantage, by being more lastingly severe, and more rigidly repulsive ? Shall we, who have been tolerating for a century those who, had we followed them, would have misled us into quicksands of unsettled faith, and quagmires of dull devotion,\* into the torrid zone of Calvin first, and into the frigid zone of Arius or Socinus afterward, unnaturally persist in repelling and stigmatizing our steadiest associates upon earth,\* in that Catholic Faith, and Primitive Piety, which are at this day our truest honour and our best inheritance ?

God forbid that we should not have been tolerant ! But let us be tolerant, wisely and impartially. We have tolerated without injury to ourselves in any thing, those who have agreed with us in nothing but the bare outline of revealed religion. Let us, after having proved the harmlessness of toleration, where there was nothing to create union, learn at length to exercise it equally to those who agree with us on every point in which the others dissent from us ; and who could not fail to catch those kindly sympathies to which such agreements gave birth, if

\* See Note VIII.

\* See Note IX.

we did not counteract the affinities of nature by the chill of an unkindly policy.

I mean nothing unkind or illiberal to Dissenting Protestants, when I say, that between them and us, *there is not any thing to create union*. It is self-evident, that their agreement with us, (except on the most general points of Christian belief) is purely negative. And though agreement in negation may readily enough combine two parties in opposing a third, it has no tendency to unite those two parties in mutual affection to each other. This can be the effect only of positive and palpable agreement. It must arise from some identity of habit and liking, from observance of similar customs, and from attachment to similar objects. In proportion as such communities exist, and no artificial barrier is interposed, coalescence of affection is little less certain than the fall of a weighty body, or the pointing of a magnet.

To take for granted that the Roman Catholics will recognize a radical congeniality between their religion and ours, so soon as equality of civil circumstances shall have left their minds at leisure and their passions at rest, will be only to give them credit for the common faculties of observation and reflection; and to question that dislike will thus be gradually abated, and conciliation gradually advanced, would be equivalent to doubting the most ordinary laws of nature.

I freely own that such an event never could be reckoned upon, if the doctrine of *exclusive salva-*

tion in its strict and literal sense, were (as Dr. D. has supposed,) an article of the Roman Catholic Creed. I am fully aware that this deadly sentiment could not fail to darken the mind, to shut up the heart, and to turn the very milk of human kindness into the venom of vipers.\* But the maintenance of any such doctrine being so clearly disproved; what is there in the nature of things, supposing only a kindly arrangement of external circumstances, to prevent either the origination or growth of conciliatory views and feelings?

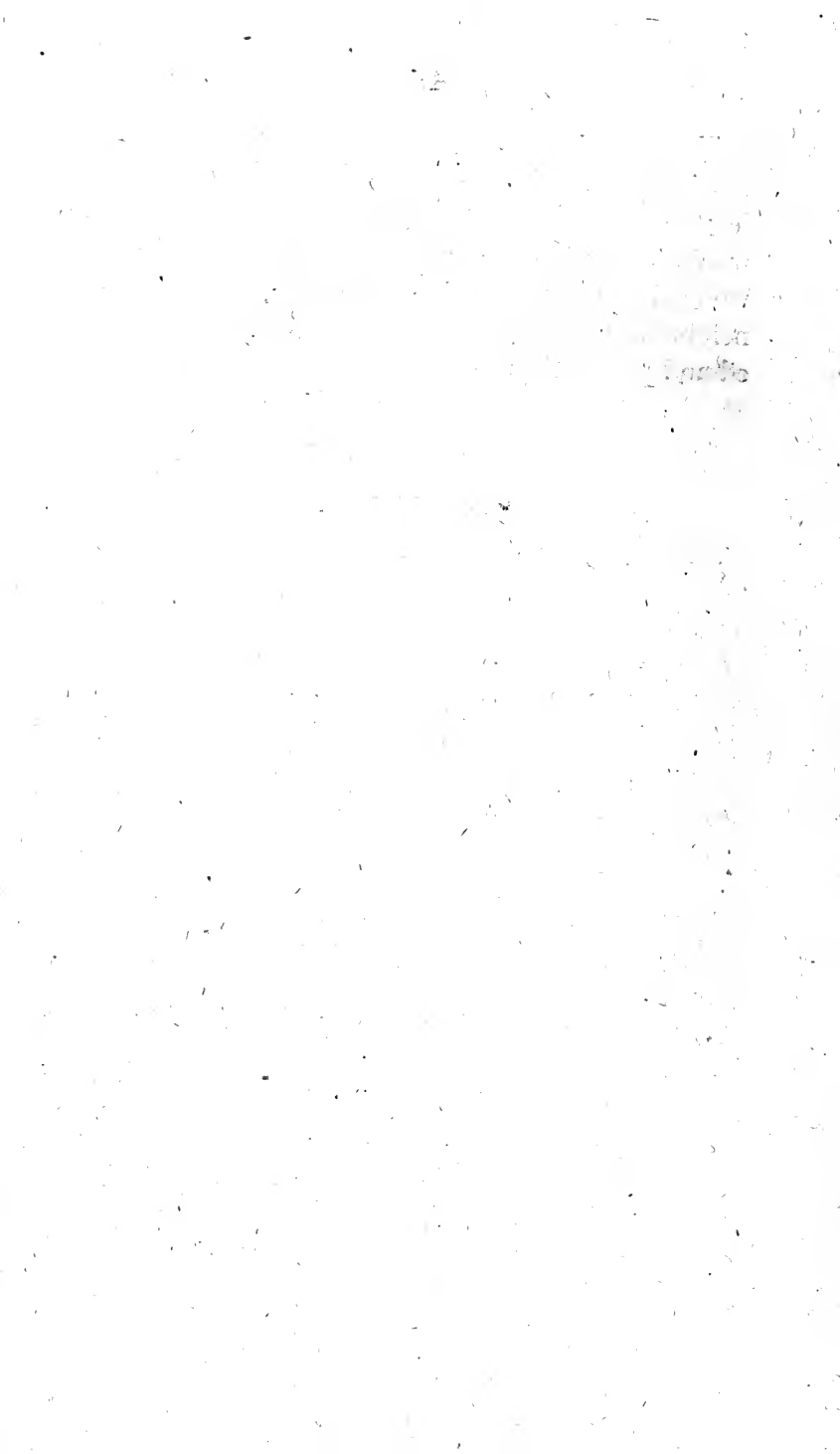
At all events what rational cause could be assigned why those who agree with us in clerical degrees and orders, in ancient creeds, in stated liturgies, in solemn festivals, in a word, in all that specially characterizes our establishment, should not on a fair trial, prove themselves as inoffensive to that establishment, as friendly to us, and as loyal to the state, as they who are radically hostile to every distinctive feature in our episcopal church, have been, for more than an hundred years?

To Protestant Dissenters let us abate nothing of that liberality the wisdom of which has been so practically demonstrated. But let us no longer refuse to make the same trial on those, whose natural susceptibilities have never yet been questioned, and whose undeniable religious congenialities constitute so many accessible points, on every one of which, were irritating circumstances removed, our resembling practices could not fail to make a kindly, and ever growing impression.

\* See Note X.

To what ultimate issue this might lead, it does not belong to my subject to inquire.\* But the least and lowest results of such a state of things would be invaluable ; while every advancing step would be a fresh pledge of safety, and a new heightening of happiness to this naturally favoured and peculiarly interesting island.

\* See NOTE XI.



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## N O T E S.

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NOTE I. If our establishment was ever liable to the charge of being *pugnacious*, it was during the very crisis of its Reformation. This petition was then introduced, into the Litany. "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, Good Lord, deliver us!" But no sooner had the accession of Elizabeth restored quiet and confidence, than this polemical prayer was expunged, to the no small annoyance of the puritanic party, who were first then beginning to exert their energies.

Yet even in the commencements of our Reformation, undue warmth could be discovered only in one or two circumstances, while in matters deemed to be of importance, unfounded prejudice against ancient usages was either prudently counteracted, or resolutely resisted. The sentiment of Bishop Ridley expresses in few words on what principle the leading work was done:—"Sudden changes," says he, "without necessary cause, and the heady putting forth of extremities, I did never love." And again:—"To dissent from ancient writers, without warrant of God's word, I cannot think it any godly wisdom."

Had Edward VI. lived much longer, another spirit might have come into operation. Zealous men on the continent were using all the means in their power to persuade the young King,

that the Church of England was still too near that of Rome ; and some of the latest measures of that reign shewed that their efforts had not been wholly in vain. Divine Providence, we may humbly believe, took its own way of averting the impending calamity.

From the accession of Elizabeth, all impassioned zeal seemed confined to Separatists and Puritanic Conformists ; which latter description was moulded by successive change of circumstances, into that well known class called Low Church-men. These certainly were strong opponents of the Roman Catholic Church ; but were they cordial members of their own ? Let their attempts to new modify the Establishment in order to qualify it to the taste of Dissenters, furnish an answer. Their virtue and personal worth I dispute not ; but I rejoice that the high church zeal of the lower house of convocation frustrated their endeavours. Even they themselves were not sorry on mature reflection. (See Birch's Life of Tillotson ? p. 179, &c.) The escapes of our establishment have been so numerous, and sometimes so critical, that they alone would furnish matter for an interesting piece of Ecclesiastical History.

What I mean by *Pugnacious Protestantism* is so identical with Lord Bacon's account of the warm spirits of his day, that I could not equally do justice to my own idea, as by transcribing his words.

“ They think it” says he “ the true touchstone to try what  
 “ is good and evil, by measuring what is more or less opposite  
 “ to the institutions of the Church of Rome, be it ceremony,  
 “ be it policy, or government ; yea be it other institutions of  
 “ greater weight ; *that* is ever most perfect which is removed  
 “ most degrees from that Church : and *that* is ever polluted  
 “ and blemished, which participatates in any appearance with  
 “ it. This is a subtle and dangerous conceit for men to enter-  
 “ tain, apt to delude themselves, more apt to delude the people,  
 “ and most apt of all to calumniate their adversaries. It is  
 “ very meet that men beware, how they be abused by this opinion ;  
 “ and that they know, that it is a consideration of much  
 “ greater wisdom and sobriety, to be well advised whether in



“ general demolition of the institutions of the Church of Rome,  
 “ there were not, (as mens actions are imperfect,) some good  
 “ purged with the bad, rather than to purge the church, as they  
 “ pretend, every day anew, which is the way to make a wound in  
 “ the bowels, as is already begun.”—*Bacon of Church Contro-*  
*versies. WORKS, 8vo Vol. 2. p. 511.*

NOTE II. Judge Blackstone states the nature of the Ecclesiastical Settlement, made by the articles of Union with Scotland, in the following words.

“ Upon these articles, and this act of Union, it is to be observed, that whatever else may be deemed fundamental and essential conditions, the preservation of the two Churches of England and Scotland, in the same state that they were in at the time of the Union, and the maintainance of the acts of uniformity which established our Common Prayer, are expressly declared so to be. And that therefore any alteration in the constitution of either of the Churches, or in the Liturgy of the Church of England (unless with the consent of the respective churches collectively or representatively given) would be an infringement of these fundamental and essential conditions, and greatly endanger the Union.—*Introd. to the Commentaries* § IV.

This, I presume is a strictly accurate statement of the condition in which the constitution has placed the two established Churches of England and Scotland, except, perhaps, in one particular, respecting which I entertain much more than doubt. In truth, I see no authority for the admission, that a collective or representative consent of either Church, would absolve the Parliament of Great Britain from its obligation, or the Sovereign from his oath, to maintain the integrity of the settlement. There is no intimation of such a reserved right in the Articles or Act; the perpetuation there, is absolute and unconditional. On what imaginable ground then could this learned author introduce a limitation, which is not so much as hinted at in any part of the compact?

To preclude any such proposition from ever being made on the part of the Church of England either collectively or representa-

tively, was much rather the object. The movers of the 5th of Anne\* were probably not more afraid of any enemies to the church, than of men within its own bosom. Presbyterian or Dissenting influence was that, of which they were apprehensive ; and there was no agency through which they would have expected it to work, more readily than through those of the clergy, who were called Low Churchmen. In fact, they had witnessed an effort of that party to new model the established formularies, soon after the Revolution, in order to make them more palatable to non-conformists ; and therefore nothing could be more deeply in their intention than to guard the church as it then stood, from its being ever exposed again to a similar danger : which assuredly was an event to be reckoned upon, so long as a temporary ascendancy of low churchmen could effect any alteration in the structure of the Establishment.

That this was strictly the impression on men's minds at the time, appears from the following remarkable passage in Dr. Calamy's Historical Additions, to his Life of Baxter. " The thus confirming the Ecclesiastical constitution here in England" says he " in all particulars upon the present foot for perpetuity, was reckoned by the Dissenters to make their way clearer. The old Puritans, many of them, fell in with the Established Church, in hope of, that way, contributing to a farther reformation ; and they that adhere to their principles have, since the Restoration, been often pressed to imitate their example. But the Government by this settlement in the Church, of all things as they were, to perpetuity, and embodying this settlement with the Union, and making it a fundamental part of it, has quite silenced that plea, and made it as senseless to urge it, as it would be weak to regard it. So that henceforward, all that are convinced that a farther reformation is needful, and that it is their duty in their places to pursue it, are bound in conscience to keep at a distance from that church, which has (as much as in it lies) barred all avenues of further light, and determined by a law that it will be as it is for ever.—*Vol. 1. p. 696, 2d. Ed. 1713.*

\* A mistake of the Press in one of Dr. D's pages, and my own inadvertence have led me to miscall this Act, the 8th of Anne.

It will be observed, that there could have been no room for this complaint, had it been still possible for a collective or representative movement of the majority of the established Clergy, to have set aside the supposed perpetuation. Without this, the object of the non-conformists could not have been accomplished at any time ; and had it now been as attainable as ever through the same means ; the condition of the non-conformists, instead of having become desperate, as Dr. Calamy considered it, would have been no worse than before.

But supposing both houses of Parliament still at liberty to accede to the wishes of a perverted majority of the Clergy, what must be done with the King's oath ? Does that royal pledge recognize such a condition ? Let not this sacred guaranty be applied to purposes as foreign to the intention of its enjoiners, as to sound policy and Christian Charity ; but let it never be forgotten, that *it has a force*, which nothing short of a change in all existing circumstances, or an actual overthrow of the constitution can make void.

If it be asked, has the Parliament of Great Britain no power whatever over the Church Establishment ? I answer by laying down this plain position :—the Parliament of Great Britain has exactly the same power over the Church of England, that it has over the Church of Scotland. This was evidently Sir William Blackstone's view of the matter, as appears from the passage I have quoted. And it will appear still more clearly to any one who examines the two acts of Parliament.

In preceding times the Parliament of England had exercised a power over the Church Establishment, (though never perhaps wholly without the concurrence of the Clergy,) such as the Scotch Presbyterian Establishment would not have submitted to, and the Scotch Parliament, after the epoch of Presbyterianism, would not have attempted. The perpetuating Act resorted to in Scotland, was therefore a natural measure : it only secured to the Kirk of Scotland that independence on the state, which it had always claimed. But the similar Act of the English Parliament did something more for the Church of England ; as it gave it an independence which it never had before. The church until then was to all intents dependent on the Parliament of England. But the power of altering the one Church was

as solemnly and sacredly withheld from the Parliament of Great Britain, as the power of altering the other. "An alteration in the constitution of either of those churches," says Sir William Blackstone, "would be an infringement of the fundamental and essential conditions of the Union."

With all due respect then, it is asked, can Parliament receive Petitions or discuss propositions, to which it has no constitutional power of acceding? Could it, for example suffer a petition against subscription to the Formularies of the Church, to lie upon its table; or could it consistently even admit of a debate, whether the Clergy of the Establishment are to retain their ancient place in the Community or to be reduced from the rank of Gentlemen and Freeholders to that of treasury stipendiaries? Than these, what more radical changes in the constitution of the Church establishment could imagination devise? Consequently, what more real infringements of the articles of Union?

Still, the Parliament has power respecting the Church. It has power to confer benefits, to strengthen privileges, to protect obvious rights, and I would add, on clear and self-evident grounds, to reduce any matter merely circumstantial to more perfect harmony (if that should appear possible) with the acknowledged substance and primary principles of the institution itself. Also, where Acts of Parliament have been perpetuated under a general title of *securing the Church Establishment*, the Parliament of Great Britain must be the sole judge, which of those undefined Acts are necessary for that purpose, and which are not; and whether those which might once have been necessary, may not now be nugatory. Acts *expressly recognized* in the perpetuating act, none can deny to be immutable; but acts not particularized require, no less than they leave room for, the exercise of judgment.

But Divine Providence may make changes wheresoever it sees good; and to this supreme arbitration, all acts of man are subordinate. In this way therefore even the articles of Union may at some future period cease to be obligatory. For example, were the great body of the Scottish nation, (I do not mean the multitude told by the head, but the clear majority of all the different ranks and orders) to become members of the Scotch Episcopal

Church, would it be possible to persevere in maintaining a Presbyterian Establishment? Other possible cases might perhaps be imagined. I mention one, of which, without pretending to any extraordinary foresight, we may, reckon upon the probable though it may be, still distant realization. In a word, (as I took for granted in the commencement of my remarks,) every human institution is liable to become obsolete through change of circumstances. But before such a change can be safely acted upon, it must be "self evident, spontaneous and radical."

NOTE III. Dr. Milner's Letters to Dr. Sturges, are not wholly occupied in defending the Roman Catholic Church. Strange, as it may sound, they contain, also a brief but spirited vindication of certain important doctrines of the Church of England, against Bp. *Hoadly* and his followers. In one particular passage of the part I refer to, Dr. M. forcibly impresses on us in what manner he estimates thoroughly orthodox churchmen, by declaring his persuasion of the cordial preference which persons of that character would give to a Roman Catholic, above an Hoadlyite. "Yes Sir," says he to the Hoadlean Dr. Sturges, "it is true "to say, that I who do not communicate with the Church of "England, have, on the present occasion defended it, and that "not unsuccessfully, against you, who hold so distinguished a "post in it. I will moreover venture to affirm, that there is "not one of its great lights, in the two last centuries, who, if "he were reduced to the necessity of holding communion with "a Catholic or a Hoadlyite, would not infinitely prefer uniting "with the former. Yes, Sir. if a Cranmer, a Ridley, a Jewel, "a Parker, a Hooker, a Bilson, an Andrews, a Pearson, a "Laud, a Gunning, and a Ken, were now living to witness the new "and unheard of doctrines, which I have quoted from certain "late publications, and contrasted with the Articles, Creeds, Catechism, and Liturgy of the Church of England, they would one "and all exclaim;—*Popery is a trifle compared with Socinianism. The former is barely superstitious; the latter is impious. The question is no longer, whether or no we shall invoke the angels and saints of God, but whether or no we shall continue to worship the consubstantial son of the Father, TRUE GOD OF*

“ *TRUE GOD. The controversy is not now, in what manner Christ is present, and communicates his grace in the Sacrament ; but whether he be there, and bestows any grace at all or not. Finally, the business at present is not so much to determine, which amongst others is the true Church that Christ instituted, as to prove that Christ instituted any Church whatsoever. I appeal to the learned, who are acquainted with the doctrines and the conduct of the above named ancient Protestant Divines, whether I have here ascribed to them any other, than their genuine sentiments*” *Letters to a Prebendary, 2d. Edit. Cork. 1802, p. 419, 420.*

I cannot help regretting, that when Dr. M. in his additions to his *Tour through Ireland*, brought this most important dispute (in which so many celebrated men have at different times taken a part) before the view of Dr. Elrington, that worthy gentleman and strong writer should have so coldly turned away from the subject. The passage I have just quoted, contains the sum of the controversy. Let true Church of England-men decide whether any other on this earth can be more interesting ; and whether a cordial disposition to co-operate with us here, ought not to be deemed a compensation for almost every other possible difference. I must also express my surprize that Dr. E. after having discussed the Ordination Controversy at some length, should have declined giving an opinion on its importance, as if through fear of appearing to agree even thus far with his antagonist. The Christian Church never can have peace, if opinions are only valued so long as they can be made matter of contention ; but thrown off as of no moment so soon as they might become matter of agreement. For my own part, I must add, that I sincerely hope there are few learned Clergymen in Ireland who think as frigidly on the Ordination Controversy as Doctor E. seems to do.

NOTE IV. St. Augustin's words are ; Dixit quidem apostolus Paulus hæreticis hominem post unam correptionem devitatum. — Sed qui sententiam suam, quamvis falsam atque perversam, nulla pertinaci animositate defundunt ; præsertim quam non audacia præsumptionis suæ pepererunt, sed a seductis atque in errorem lapsis parentibus acceperunt ; quærunt autem cautâ soli-

citudine veritatem; corrigi parati cum invenerint, nequaquam sunt inter hæreticos deputandi. Epist. LXII. Edit. Basil p. 528.

I have to add, that St. Augustin elsewhere expressly defines a Heretic thus. “ Hæreticus est, ut mea fert opinio, qui  
 “ alicujus temporalis commodi, et maxime gloriæ principatusque  
 “ sui, gratiâ, falsas ac novas opiniones vel gignit vel sequitur.—A  
 “ Heretic, in my judgement, is one, who on account of some  
 “ temporal advantage, most generally his own celebrity and  
 “ dominion over others, fabricates or follows false and new opi-  
 “ nions.” Consequently, where no such motive can be sup-  
 posed, there is no room for the imputation of Heresy. I need  
 not remark on the exact agreement between this sentiment and  
 all that I have quoted from Dr. Hawarden.

NOTE V. La Religion ne nous ordonne pas de croire que nous vivons avec *des damnés*. En nous apprenant à juger les *doctrines*, elle nous défend de juger les *personnes*. Elle nous ordonne, non-seulement de désirer, mais encore d’espérer le salut de nos freres, d’adorer les jugemens de Dieu, sur ceux qui pèrissent, et de croire que nul ne sera puni pour des erreurs invincibles. La Religion catholique enseigne que, hors de l’Eglise point de salut; mais elle nous apprend aussi qu’on peut appartenir à l’Eglise sans être dans sa communion extérieure; et tous les Theologiens, après St. Augustin, reconnoissent que l’Eglise a des Enfans cachés dans les sectes séparées de l’unité. *Defense L’Ordre Social* p. 273.

NOTE VI. Since writing the foregoing remarks I have looked attentively over Dr. Butler’s Catechism; (the Edition of 1800, revised enlarged, approved, and recommended, by the four R. C. Archbishops of Ireland;) and I acknowledge the impression it makes upon me, is very different from that made on Dr. Duigenan. There are, no doubt, expressions in it which may sound harsh to Protestant ears; but there are still less ambiguous positions of a strictly qualifying nature; the former must of course in all reason be explained by the latter.

For example, it is asked—“ Can persons who deny outwardly,  
 “ the true religion or church in which they inwardly believe, ex-  
 “ pect salvation while in that state?” The answer may be

readily supposed ; but is it not intimated by the terms of the question, that it is not the mere rejection of the true Religion or Church, but the rejecting it against inward conviction, that constitutes the criminality ?

It is asked :—“ Are all obliged to be of the true Church ? Answer—Yes, no one can be saved out of it.” I believe there is not in the whole catechism, any thing more severe than this assertion. But let us mark the very next question and answer. “ Q. Will strict honesty to every one, and moral good works, ensure salvation, whatever church or religion one professes ?” This is a trying question ; and were Dr. D’s. ideas strictly founded, we could infallibly anticipate the answer. But what is actually said ? “ No, unless such good works be enlivened by faith, which worketh by charity ?” Is this bigotry ? On the contrary, few as these words are, they convey by clearest implication, a sentiment as opposite to heart-contracting bigotry, as light is opposite to darkness ? Instead of any revolting anathema, we have here nothing but the prime principle of practical Christianity. On the whole, as far as I can judge, Dr. Butler’s Catechism, as at present circulated, seems to contain as mild a representation of the Roman Catholic Faith, as is any where to be met with, together with such a body of Religious and Moral instruction of a more general kind, as does much credit to the pious zeal and truly Christian principles of those from whom it has proceeded.

NOTE VII. It is far from my intention to introduce religious controversy into this brief publication ; and it is equally far from my expectation that the Roman Catholic Church should acknowledge ours, as either *Catholic* or *Apostolical*. But Roman Catholics cannot reasonably take it amiss, that we should claim these characters for ourselves, when we found them not on rivalry, but resemblance, and not on mere resemblance, but on actual derivation.

The Roman Catholic Church, must on its own principles account our Church *schismatical*, and until Divine Providence shall change circumstances and afford clearer light, we must patiently bear the imputation. But I cannot resist the persuasion, that if learned and candid Roman Catholics, were dispassi-



onately to examine the true characters of our church, not as exhibited by any description of teachers or writers, but as exemplified in the various formularies contained in the book of Common Prayer, they would become convinced that the epithet of *Heretical*, was not fairly applicable to our Established Religion.

But be this as it may, it is right that they and others should know, that the strange tales which were put in circulation, respecting the consecration of the first bishops in England, after the accession of ELIZABETH, may, in Ireland, be suffered to sink into obloquy. True or false, they have no place here. Whatever other questions may be started respecting the Episcopacy of the established church of Ireland, regularity of succession is placed beyond possibility of doubt. In order to give the most correct information on this point, I transcribe what I find in Harris's Enlargement of WARE, under the head of ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

“ ADAM LOFTUS, was consecrated by HUGH CURWEN, Archbishop of Dublin, and other bishops, about the beginning of March, towards the close of the year 1562. Through this prelate our Irish Protestant Bishops derive their succession, without any pretence of blemish, or open for cavil. For he was consecrated by Archbishop CURWEN ; who had been consecrated in England, according to the forms of the Roman Pontifical, in the third year of Queen Mary. It is true, some derive their succession from an higher source, (viz.) from George Brown, Archbishop of Dublin, who was consecrated in the reign of HENRY the VIIIth ; and who consecrated Hugh Goodacre, Archbishop of Armagh, and John Bale, Bishop of Ossory, in the reign of king Edward the VIth. But these bishops were not consecrated according to the old Pontifical, or, any other ritual, then in force by the laws of this kingdom ; which was not authorized here until the second year of ELIZABETH. And Dean Lockwood, at the time of their consecration, protested against the form of it ; although at that time no other was used in England. And for this reason, our Irish hierarchy rather choose to derive their succession from Archbishop CUR-

“ WEN through Archbishop LOFTUS than from Brown, through “ Goodacre and Bale, as not liable to the least objection.”

It may be proper to add, that Hugh Curwen remained five years after this, in the see of Dublin. Being then infirm, he was at his own desire translated to Oxford, where he lived scarcely one year. He was Chancellor, and one of the Lords Justices under Queen Mary, and he was for some time Chancellor under Queen Elizabeth.

WARE tells us, that “ he was consecrated in St. Paul’s Church, London, together with James Turberville, Bishop of Exeter, and William Glynn, Bishop of Bangor, on the 8th of September, 1555, and four days after, viz. on the 12th of September, he was appointed by Queen Mary, (whose chaplain he was) Chancellor of Ireland, at Greenwich.”

It is not improbable that different persons were disposed to deduce the Irish Episcopacy from George Brown or Hugh Curwen, accordingly as they themselves were inclined to latitudinarian or High-Church Principles. The former might possibly prefer that derivation which had most in it of Protestantism ; the latter would as naturally adhere to that, which connected them with the ancient Church.

NOTE VIII. I mean no illiberal censure on our non-conforming fellow-Christians. I readily acknowledge the sincerity which has always existed, and sometimes abounded among them. And as I am sure they have been one of the great means of carrying onward our national constitution until it reached that point, where, if the British public be not infatuated, they will, for ever let it rest ; so I doubt not that under the guidance of Divine Providence, non-conformity has in various ways contributed toward the general system of moral melioration.

Still I am obliged to hold the opinion I have expressed, respecting its immediate consequences. On the most impartial view of the habits and tendencies of non-conformists. I am obliged to believe, that no one characteristic more uniformly distinguishes their whole body than *unsettledness in Faith* ; and that no result is more certain to arise from their method of committing public worship to individual discretion, than a predominance of *Devotional Dullness*.

In support of these assertions, I can produce irresistible evidence. Mrs. Barbauld, herself a non-conformist, and by no means wholly free (as some of her expressions will shew) from the prejudices of her party, has acknowledged, that though while a sect retains its first plainness, simplicity and zeal, it wants nothing which an establishment could give; yet "that *first* fervour" having declined, an establishment becomes far more respectable." Mrs. B. adds these remarkable words: "The coldness and "langour of a declining sect produces scepticism. Indeed a "sect is never stationary; as it depends entirely on passions and "opinions; though it often attains excellence, it never rests "in it; but is always in danger of one extreme or the "other."

Could a more melancholy account be given of the religious circumstances of any people? Alas what security would there be for Christianity continuing in the world, if this spirit of vacillation were equally prevalent throughout the Christian Church? But perhaps Mrs. B. does not tell us the worst of it. In some of the most venerated individuals amongst dissenters, we find more or less of this unfixedness. *Doddridge* himself, I am sorry to say, might be charged with strange want of zeal for those *Catholic Verities*, which we have every reason to think he personally believed; and it would be only necessary to transcribe *Watts's* own words, to show how deeply his scepticism on the same great points, embittered his latter days.

Yet this is the class, who for a century and an half, used unremitting exertions to bring us into the same unsettled circumstances with themselves. Had not Divine Providence again and again preserved us, we should have been caught in that plausible snare of *Comprehension*; and at this day we too might have been enveloped in that mental darkness, which has been thickening for so many years, in almost every other reformed communion.

I need not waste words to prove that our reverence for Christian antiquity, and the systematic disregard to it, which has elsewhere prevailed, have caused this important difference. While other communions rejected every thing that the unreform-

ed Church respected, the express principle of our reformers was to adhere to that church as far as they conceived that it adhered to pure antiquity. Whether this principle was in every circumstance acted upon, I do not now enquire; but its being maintained as far as it was, made us what we are: the only settled portion of the Reformation.

But should we have remained, what we then became, if that great body from which we deemed it wise to receive guidance on so many vital points, had not still continued in our view; presenting to us the same great matters of agreement, and thereby virtually supporting us in that Catholicity, from which our professed allies would have drawn us, if not by urgency, at least by example? If our episcopacy, had not been thus kept in countenance, are we sure we should have valued or even retained it? Had there not been a portion of our clergy, as kindly to the Roman Catholics, as others were to the non-conformists, *we know*, we should have lost our venerable Service, and received in its stead what by this time we might have been not undeservedly, tired of, and of course ready to exchange for some newer contrivance. Let us not then go on to act, as if we had received nothing but injury, where we have received solid and weighty benefit; or as if all the peril was on one side, when experience so forcibly demonstrates the justness of a more impartial reckoning.

NOTE. IX. My zealous Protestant readers may possibly think I am going an unwarrantable length, when I call the Roman Catholics our *steadiest associates* in Catholic Faith and Primitive Piety. But I really mean no more than to state a matter of notoriety, in which if I speak unfoundedly, I am open to immediate refutation. Where, then, I ask, among Protestant communions have we allies on whom we can depend in our maintenance of those essential truths—the *Trinity*, the *true* and *proper Godhead* of CHRIST, and the *necessity* of *Divine Grace*? Believing as I do invincibly, that these truths constitute the vitality of our Christian Faith—that they enter alike deeply into its divinity, and its philosophy; its satisfactoriness to the mind, and its efficacy on the heart, I cannot avoid making these my standard by which to estimate both the

steadiness and the soundness of professing Christians. I do not mean to say that all who dissent from these articles of faith, will on that account perish everlastingly. God forbid I should! The Athanasian Creed, as it stands in our prayer book, in my opinion, asserts no such thing. But I do mean to express my conviction, after the deepest thought, and most extended observation of which I am capable, that whether individuals seek instruction for themselves, or convey it to others, from the pulpit or through the press, in domestic or friendly intercourse, the moral energies of Christianity, will manifest themselves in their proper fruits proportionably, *cæteris paribus*, to the degree, in which just place is given, and cordial regard paid to these highest CATHOLIC VERITIES. Observing therefore so many portions of the reformed body, swerving more or less from these truths, and too often professedly abandoning them, (insomuch, that in this instance, above all others Mrs. Barbauld's representation has been verified, is verifying, and I fear will yet be verified to the very letter, both at home and abroad;) and seeing clearly on the other hand, that our Roman Catholic Fellow-Christians have lost nothing of their original zeal for these truths, but are as firm in adhering to them, and as earnest in defending them, as even the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, I cannot but acknowledge this vital difference, and account the *Catholic Roman* to be, by very many degrees, a sounder Christian, and truer friend (in effect) to our national Church-establishment, than an *uncatholic Protestant*.

It may be asked, do not Roman Catholics frequently become Infidels? I answer that I fear they often do—and so, it can scarcely be doubted, do Lutheran and Calvinist Protestants. But after all there is a difference between the two cases. Infidelity, it may be allowed, is a worse evil to the individual than Arianism or Socinianism. But either of these latter evils implies a deeper injury to Christianity. Infidelity is desertion, or at worst open hostility; but the Arian or Socinian is an enemy within the precincts, who diffuses his pernicious influence through the garrison, and seduces many, who would have repelled the more open and palpable mischief.

NOTE X. It will no doubt be objected, that this has been the doctrine acted upon by the Church of Rome, in numberless flagrant instances of persecution, as well as in the uniform management of the Inquisition. To this I reply, that much thought and some attentive reading have compelled me to make a deep distinction between that great Ecclesiastical Commonwealth, which is denominated the Roman Catholic Church, and that usurped dominion which the Bishop of Rome has been exercising over this commonwealth for so many ages.

That the Church itself has admitted opinions and practices which an unfettered mind, however kindly disposed, must abstractedly disapprove, my own feelings persuade me. But while in most instances of this kind I stop at abstract disapprobation, because I conceive it possible, that what I am led to disapprove, Divine Providence may have wisely permitted, and clearer knowledge of the great meliorative system of the moral world, may shew to have been deeply beneficial, I cannot but express unqualified horror and detestation at those enormities, of which the Church has been made the scene, and its character the victim, through the abused exercise of Papal Supremacy.

I am the more bound to assert this distinction, because I have been taught to make it, solely by worthy writers of the Roman Catholic Church;—above all by the excellent FLEURY, in his *Discours sur L'Histoire Ecclesiastique*. In this matchless compendium of ecclesiastical knowledge, and religious and moral wisdom, I hear the deeply pious author, exclaiming at the close of the sixth century, “that the good days of the “ Church are past.” I hear him lamenting the credulity and superstition which then began like a dark cloud to spread over the Church. I hear him complain of the fabrication of false miracles—the promise of temporal instead of eternal rewards the undue veneration of relics—the secularization of Churchmen, and the despotism of their Chief, advancing (after the death of the excellent Gregory,) through successive usurpations, until at length through forged Decretals, it became absolute; and by the agency of the begging friars, spread itself, like an *incubus*, over the whole extent of the

Western Church, reducing episcopacy to a cramped and contracted imbecility, and turning earthly magistracy into a degraded instrument of its irresistible power.

That the subjugation thus effected, was as complete as it was deplorable will readily be allowed. But be it remembered, that the Church which was the victim of the evil, cannot in justice or reason be identified with its oppressor. The constitutional power of the Church resided in its Episcopacy, whose authority was held to be derived from our Saviour himself, not through one apostle only, but through the apostles generally, to whom bishops were regarded as regular successors. It was accordingly against this divinely instituted authority that the Papal influence was chiefly directed; and it may be affirmed that the uniform object of successive Popes, for several centuries, was, to reduce Episcopacy to a shadow, in order that the Pontiff and his confidential agents might meet, throughout the Western Church, neither rivalry nor resistance.

So systematic as well as persevering was the papal hostility to bishops, that at the Council of Trent, though no point seemed more necessary to be asserted than the Divine right of Episcopacy, considering how universally it was denied both by Calvinists and Lutherans, the Pope could not be induced to permit one explicit word upon the subject to enter into the decrees. The strongest efforts were made by those bishops to whom the integrity of their order was of greater value than the Pope's favour: but the Legates and such bishops as were devoted to the court of Rome, made as strenuous, and more successful resistance.

In the last paragraph of Father Paul's history of that Council, we have this remarkable statement: "On the 12th of March, the Pope made a promotion of nineteen Cardinals, in order to reward those who had distinguished themselves in the Council, particularly by their support of the Apostolic See; in which, it was resolved to include none, who had maintained the residence or institution of bishops to be of *Divine Right*; however they might possess the qualities which are generally thought to give a title to that honour: Nor was there any scruple in declaring this intention to all sorts of persons and upon every occasion."

We have another remarkable testimony to the general feeling of the Court of Rome, on this subject, in one of the tracts of the well-known *Dr. Michael Geddes*; than whom no man searched more industriously into the circumstances of the Roman Catholic Church, nor with less disposition to serve its interests, by the result of any enquiry. In his account of the Inquisition in Portugal, he says: "The Popes having thus appointed Inquisitors, to be judges of Heresy, was a great encroachment on the Episcopal Jurisdiction, *which the Papal, ever since it pretended to be monarchical has sought by a thousand ways to lessen.*" *Geddes's Tracts*, vol. 1. p. 389.

Thus, it is self evident that from the epoch of the Pope's aggrandisement, the Roman Catholic Church has contained within itself, two not only distinct, but jarring interests. But this fact being established, a necessity inevitably arises for enquiring how far they acted together in those enormities which it has been usual to charge generally upon the Church of Rome.

The passage from *Dr. Geddes* gives us on this point also, clear though brief information. We learn from it that that prime engine of persecution whose very name excites sensations of horror, was not only a measure of the Papal power exclusively, but that the arrangement of its executive, conveyed evidence to the world, that Bishops were in the view of the Pope, the most unfit agents for his purpose.

But another not less striking fact is, that persecution in any of its severer forms was not only unpractised but reprobated in the Catholic Church, until the extended power of the Pope gave birth to new agencies, and still newer principles and practices.

The enlightened *Fleury* does not hesitate to assert, that "of all the changes in discipline, he saw none that had done more discredit to the Church than the rigour exercised towards Heretics." He shews largely, what had been the sentiments of the Fathers of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries; and he thus expresses himself respecting the altered views of later times: "These noble sentiments were forgotten in the 12th century, when Peter de Celles writing to St. Thomas of Canterbury said, 'that *patience alone* was the resource of the Primitive



Church while persecuted by external enemies. But at present, adds he, when the Church has attained her full age she ought to correct her children.' "As if the Church had not been powerful under Theodosius the Great ; or as if it had been through weakness, that she had endured the persecution of Pagans and Heretics."

To shew us more clearly from what source these calamities had proceeded, the worthy Author describes the new rules which were put in force respecting penances. He particularly mentions the case of Raymond, Count of Toulouse, who made his appearance with a rope about his neck, and rods in his hand, with which he was to be beaten by his Clerical correctors ; and also, that of the Emperor Henry IV. who having come to receive absolution from Gregory VII. was suffered to remain three entire days, from morning till evening, fasting and barefoot, at the gate of the Pontifical palace.

The reflections which *Fleury* makes on these monstrous proceedings, do equal credit to his head and heart ; but they also demonstrate, that the abuses which have been thought to bring general disgrace on the Roman Catholic Church, have not any where been lamented with deeper feeling, or animadverted on with more honest severity, than within that Church. In truth, it is not possible to read these discourses with any degree of candid attention, and not learn from them to make the important distinction already mentioned, between the ruthless Despotism which inflicted the evils, and the subjugated Church which was even more the sufferer than Heretics themselves. It would, perhaps, be difficult to pronounce whether Heretics or Bishops, (who retained spirit or virtue, and such were never wholly wanting ) were the more select object of the Papal machinations.

I cannot withhold the picture which *Fleury* gives of the two mendicant Orders of Francis and Dominic, who seem as if they had come together into being, with an almost mysterious correspondence to the exigence of the moment ; since it would be difficult to conceive how the Papal Despotism could have filled up its own outline, without such subaltern auxiliaries.

"The mendicant Friars" says he, "under pretext of Charity interfered in all sorts of business public and private. They

“ made their way into the privacy of families, and got themselves  
 “ entrusted with executorships. They accepted of deputations  
 “ for the negotiating of peace between states and sovereigns.  
 “ The Popes, more than all others, willingly employed them,  
 “ as having no interest of their own to stand in the way of their  
 “ devotedness, and as being likely to put their employer to the  
 “ least possible expence. But that which most affected their  
 “ character was the Inquisition : for although this had for its  
 “ object the maintaining of the Faith, its exercise is of the  
 “ same nature with that of common criminal judicatures ; infor-  
 “ mations, captures of criminals, prisons, condemnations, con-  
 “ fiscations ; infamous or pecuniary penalties, and often corporeal  
 “ punishments, through the ministry of the secular power. It  
 “ could not but appear strange, especially in the commencement,  
 “ to see *Religious*, professing humility the most profound, and  
 “ poverty the most exact, transformed all at once into Magis-  
 “ trates having Apparitors and armed familiars (or guards) with  
 “ treasures at their disposal, making themselves terrible to all  
 “ the world.”

*Eighth Discourse § X.*

The reader may compare this passage with that from Dr.  
 Geddes ; and on a fair view of all that is now brought before him,  
 he may judge whether any doubt can remain of the real quarter  
 to which we are to ascribe the disgraces of the Church, and the  
 calamities of the Christian world, from the eighth century to  
 the period of the Reformation ; or perhaps, I should rather say,  
 until the knell of the Papal power was sounded, in the dissolu-  
 tion of that new and equally opportune body of auxiliaries,  
 the society of Jesuits.

That it is always easy to draw an exact line between the op-  
 pressor, and the oppressed—the instrument and the victim of  
 Pontifical tyranny, I do not maintain. For too sure it is, that  
 wherever Bishops were influenced by a worldly temper, by am-  
 bition, or avarice, or the love of pleasure, they were much more  
 disposed to fall in with, than to resist, the torrent of corruption ;  
 and to take their part in the crime, that they might have their  
 share in the spoils.

But, for the credit of human nature, let us ever remember,  
 that the page of history, secular or ecclesiastical, is not an exact

transcript of real life. In those active movements which form the matter of History, the evil passions of man must ever be most apparent, and virtue of whatever kind must seem to possess a disproportionate place. Vice is loud and turbulent, and attracts more than its just share of attention; while virtue retires from tumultuous scenes, and pursues its noiseless tenor amid objects better fitted to its feelings. To estimate, therefore, the entire character of the Christian Church, from the 8th to the 16th century, merely by the aggressions of the Papal See, the degeneracy of begging friars, or the occasional depravity of ecclesiastical counts and princes, would be to reckon by a rule which daily observation proves erroneous. Experience shews that worth and excellence, not visible on the surface of life, are to be found on fair enquiry, in every class of society. Probably the evils which *Fleury* complains of, were at as great an height in the twelfth century, as at any period whatever; yet that age, corrupted as it was, had its *Anselm* and its *Bernard*. Can we doubt, then, that the interior of the Church would have furnished numberless instances of unaffected piety and disinterested virtue?

But however, unable we may be to trace any clear line of demarkation, between the worthy and the unworthy portions of the Roman Catholic Church, our certainty that such a distinction exists, ought to put an effectual end to all indiscriminate censure. Especially, in forming any general estimate of that Church, or of any of its great distinguishable members, we are bound to keep in view, what so many irrefragable facts oblige us to admit, that however widely and grossly corruption spread itself over the surface of the Church, it could not wholly destroy the integrity of its substance;—that the tyranny of the Papal power neither did nor could dissolve or vitiate the Episcopacy;—that the systematic opposition and jealousy on the part of the Papal power, proves not only that the episcopacy was ever distinct from that power, but that it was never wholly corrupted by it;—and that on the whole, we are never to extend to the Roman Catholic Church as governed by its Episcopacy, those feelings of reprobation which are kept alive in us from age to age, by the enormities of the court of Rome, and its wide-spread train of functionaries.

If these observations have any general truth, they are at least as applicable to the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, as to any other portion of that great body. If the great corruption of the Church has been derived from lust of aggrandisement and the fascination of power, the effect cannot, surely, be greatest there, where for so long a time there has been least of the cause.—If Episcopacy has been a natural object of Papal antipathy, undue effects of Papal influence are not most to be apprehended there, where an Episcopal Hierarchy remains entire, through its own inherent strength, after so many years of external discountenance and depression. If during those years, it has maintained a closer intercourse with the Papal See, than even the laws of the Roman Catholic religion required at its hands, that intercourse (as has been shewn in a late very learned and ingenious publication\*) is clearly to be resolved into the peculiar circumstances of the Irish Roman Catholic Church, which made it feel a necessity of binding itself more closely to its visible head, that it might by that means acquire additional strength, against the pressure of worldly difficulties and trials.—Lastly, if the stated conduct of any collective body be an evidence of the internal principles by which that body is actuated, it would appear that no heads of a Church on this earth are more exempt from those influences, which, according to *Fleury*, were the chief causes of ecclesiastical deterioration, than the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops. For how devoid must those men be of secular ambition, and the spirit of political intrigue, amongst whom *Translations* are hardly ever, if indeed ever known? Let intelligent and candid men judge—whether this single fact does not afford a deep pledge for the political inoffensiveness of the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops;—whether the spirit of intrigue can be supposed to live in men who have thus quelled within themselves even the natural and pardonable love of change;—and whether this feature alone does not confirm the title of the Irish Roman Catholic prelacy, to be rated not amongst the most decayed, but amongst the soundest parts of their Church?

I am induced to add one more quotation from *Fleury*, in order to give a distinct idea of what sober mind-

\* A Letter, &c. by Thomas Moore, Esq.

ed Roman Catholics actually believe respecting the Papal power.

“Is it not useful,” says *Fleury*, “to point out to honest minds a reasonable medium between the opposite extremes, to which modern authors have been carried? the Pope is not Antichrist; God forbid! but neither is he impeccable, nor yet an absolute monarch in the Church, with regard to either temporal or spiritual matters.\*—Let us candidly acknowledge that Gregory VII. and Innocent III. deceived by the spurious decretals, and by the false reasonings of the theologians of their time, pushed their authority too far, and made it odious by that extension; nor let us pretend to justify excesses, whose causes and deadly consequences are open to our view. Whatever men may say, the first ages evidently furnished a greater number of holy Popes than the last; and both the morals and discipline of the Church of Rome itself, were much more pure. Is it credible then, that the popes should have only began to know their rights, and to exercise their power in its full extent, after their own lives had become less edifying, and their own particular flock worse regulated? This reflexion furnishes a weighty objection against the new maxims.”

*Fourth Discourse.*

But it may be asked, have we reasonable ground for believing that *Fleury's* sentiments respecting the Papal Supremacy, are in any measure those of the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland? I answer that on this point we may best satisfy ourselves, by ascertaining the present stated course of clerical education? We may have access to the Books used for this purpose, viz:—A Volume of Theological Tracts, published for the use of the Students of Maynooth, in the year 1796, and a Treatise *De Ecclesiâ*, published last year by Dr De la Hogue, professor of Divinity. In these we may see, what is inculcated upon those who are to be public teachers; and consequently may know the principles which actuate the Roman Catholic Church, in this country, at its inmost centre.

\* Ni monarch absolu dans l'Eglise pour le temporel et pour le spiritual.

In the former of these Volumes a Tract has been admitted, in which (being a compilation from various writers) propositions occur, favouring the higher notion of the Pope's infallibility. But on the first mention of this opinion a note is added at the foot of the page, informing the students, that "the Gallican Church holds a contrary doctrine; to which *they* must adhere; and that this caution is to be kept in view in every other instance throughout the tract, in which the Ultramontane Doctrine may happen to occur."\*

The attachment of the Irish Roman Catholics to the Gallican Doctrine is further evinced by their introducing into this volume, *Veron's Regula Fidei*. In this celebrated work, the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church assume perhaps the mildest form in which they have yet appeared. Were I to make quotations from it, even learned Protestants would read them with surprize. I shall only observe, that according to this Author, no decision of the Pope, without a General Council, or an equivalent concurrence of the Catholic Church, has ever constituted or can constitute an article of Faith; and that the Pope (were he to pronounce without a General Council) might, by possibility, be deemed an actual teacher of Heresy, without blemish to the Catholicity of him, who thought so. *Gerson, Almain and Pope Adrian VI.* who had in fact exhibited such a charge, are spiritedly defended against the Papal advocate Bellarmine; and though the writer declares himself in favour of a temperament, removed from both extremes, he strongly protests against those who would charge the great men already named, with the least deviation from *Faith* or approach toward *Heresy*. *Tract. Gener. Dub. 1790, p. 64, &c.*

The latter work which I have mentioned, refers to the arguments used by *Veron*, and on the more material points adopts his very words. What however particularly deserves attention is, that the learned professor discusses the subject of the Papal Infallibility for the express purpose of elucidating the

\* Contrariam doctrinam tenet Ecclesia Gallicana, eique adhaerendum est. Hæc animadversio sufficiat et pro cæteris locis in quibus occurrere posset Ultramontana doctrina.

*Tract. Gen. Dub. 1796, p. 22.*

grounds on which Roman Catholics can consistently subscribe the declaration respecting that supposed tenet enjoined by the 33d of his present majesty.

“ The demand” says he in a short preface, “ of such a declaration, from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, clearly indicates how much the article of Papal Infallibility offends the minds of Protestants. Since, therefore, they incessantly urge this objection against Catholics; and are evidently alarmed at the dangers with which this sentiment seems to threaten the civil constitution, it is for the interest of the Church, that what is most true, should be placed beyond the shadow of a doubt, to wit, that without any imputation of error in faith, or of schism, the Pope may be denied to be infallible, or to be superior to ecumenical councils.”

As to the manner in which the learned professor has treated the subject, I refer candid readers to the work itself. Let them attentively weigh what is said from the 375th to the 384th page, and then determine, whether youths thus instituted, are likely to grow up in habits of dangerous submission to the Papal See ?\*

NOTE XI. To speculate on the future is one of the most natural exercises of the human mind; and who can avoid speculating on possible arrangements hereafter of a pacific kind between the two Churches in this island, after reading the suggestion lately thrown out on that subject, by a learned and certainly not illiberal Roman Catholic writer? I refer particularly to a passage, in an introduction, BY IRENÆUS, prefixed to a late publication in which the very respectable author expressly declares his opinion that “ on some of the points which he deems “ unchangeable,” the real “ Church of England agrees with that of Rome; and on

*Hæc quæ a catholicis Hiberniæ exigitur declaratio manifeste indicat quantum Protestantium animos offendat articulus infallibilitatis Papæ. Cum ergo id Catholicis obicere non desinant, multumque anxii videantur de infaustis quæ sibi fingunt hujus sententiæ consecrariis in politicum ordinem, ad causam ecclesiæ pertinet, ut id quod verissimum est, ultra omne dubium ponamus, nempe, absque ullâ erroris in fide aut schismatis nota, negare posse Papam esse infallibilem vel superiorem Conciliis œcumenicis.*

“ others she does not differ from her as much as some persons think ; nor so much as that, on a revisal of her rubrics and canons, undertaken in the spirit of peace, an explanation could not take place, which neither of the parties would object to.”

Though I might question, perhaps, several of the authorities on which this writer founds his idea of the *real* Church of England, and should be of opinion, that the sentiments of such writers as *Forbes*, *Montague*, *Heylin*, *Thorndike*, and *Dodwel*, are at this day little known and less attended to, yet, I am inclined to believe, that respecting matters of deepest importance, and in which it may one day appear clear to all that the *Essence* of Catholicity consists, there is weighty truth in the learned author's observation. After much thought, and serious investigation, I remain persuaded, that the Church of England agrees far more substantially, in all inward and vital principles of Christian Faith and Morals, with the Church of Rome, than she does with either the Lutheran, or the Calvinist communion. With the last I am confident it can be proved that she has no manner of sympathy ; with the Lutheran the agreement lies solely in one or two apparent, and probably it may be shewn, but apparent, similarities of expression. But with the Church of Rome I conceive the agreement to be so substantial, as to make it morally impossible for our formularies to be perfectly understood, by one who is only acquainted with Protestant theology ? To mention one instance—who that reads Protestant authors only, has any distinct idea of that which we are continually praying against in our litany—*DEADLY sin* ? The truth is, Roman Catholic Divines have continued to draw from the same sources, from whence the liturgical formularies common to us both are derived, and therefore they cannot but afford an aid for understanding those formularies, which those who never have gone to the fountain head, cannot possibly furnish.

Most cordially therefore do I express a wish, that somewhat of that “ Spirit of Peace” to which this author looks forward, for mutual explanation, were now to be felt and yielded to, in order to mutual enquiry, and correct acquaintance with each other. This *must* precede, before there can be any rational



step towards reconciliation. Hitherto examination has scarcely ever been dispassionate. Both parties have eyed each other solely to find the weakest points, in order to give a deeper wound, and therefore, at this moment, it might be impossible to name a writer on either side, who has done common justice to the better qualities of the other.

I never can believe that such a distinction as that between Protestants and Roman Catholics, could have taken place, and still less, subsisted so long, without the special concurrence of over-ruling Providence. I must believe, therefore, it was permitted in equal wisdom and benignity; and that fruits are to arise from it, such as will amply indemnify for the evils inseparable from such a deep and wide-spread misunderstanding. My conjecture, is that Providence intends we should learn lessons from the inspection and observation of one another, which no possible self-observation could afford, and for which no one single system could give sufficient variety and scope. When this end has been answered, then, and not before, may our union be looked for; in order that what we attained apart, and (could only have so attained) we may enjoy together.

Let not the Roman Catholic Church disdainfully reject the idea of yet learning important lessons from a candid examination of ours. The language of disdain has been too much used; but no temper can do credit to a Church which would disgrace an individual. Individuals on our part, have been, and alas! still are, abundantly acrimonious. But there is an haughtiness expressed by Roman Catholic writers, in the name and person of their Mystical Mother, which is exclusively their own. For the honour of a Parent to whom we have not yet renounced our relation, we question their warrant for such modes of address, because they are not *Christian*. *Humility* would carry a far more authentic mark, and serve a far happier purpose.

It is confessed by writers of the first authority that though the Church cannot so err, as fatally to mislead her children, (an infallibility, by the way, which probably few reasonable persons would dispute) she *may err*, by *enjoining what is useless*, and even *enforcing it by penalties unreasonably severe* \* Here therefore

Veronii Regula Fidei Tract. Gen. Dub. 1796, p. 372.

there is room for the Church to learn what she does not yet know and to correct that in which she may have erred—erred, not so as to have led any person to perdition, but so as, by possibility to occasion less cause, less division among Christians, and to obstruct the full influence of Revealed Truth upon the world.

The venerable Cyprian has sanctioned this sentiment, and expressed his firm expectation that more perfect knowledge would be gradually communicated :—"Dum instruit in futurum, quod "facere debeamus, de præterito ignoscit quod simpliciter "erravimus. Et quia jam secundus ejus adventus nobis appropinquat, magis ac magis benigna ejus et larga dignatio corda "nostra luce veritatis illuminat."\* (Felli Cyprian. Epist. LXIII.) If Cyprian felt a want of fuller information, what Christian of this day can venture to speak less humbly? If he entertained the hope that new beamings-forth of truth, would precede the second advent of our Redeemer, we, whose lot is cast in the latter days may cherish it with nearer expectation.

But fuller knowledge will require suitable means; and why may not our Church be one of those means, through which even the Roman Catholic Church may attain a brighter light of truth than she yet enjoys :—"The eye cannot say to the hand I have "no need of thee, nor the head to the feet, I have no need of "you." And who can tell but that our Lord may in his wise counsels have provided new aids for his mystical body against new emergencies, that as each work has had its agency, each season might have its suitable provision?

Were ideas of this kind once to be admitted, I should entertain no doubt, that at length through the influence of *the spirit of Peace, an explanation might take place, which neither of the parties would object to.* But I am obliged to say, that desirable as such a consummation would be, through such a path alone

\* "While he (our Saviour) teaches us what we ought to do for the future, he pardons, in what is past, those errors into which we have fallen through our simplicity; and because his second coming is now drawing near, he graciously illuminates our hearts with a larger effluence of the light of Truth."

can it ever be attained. For in order to such an event, *Essential Catholicity* must be the sole condition insisted on, and *essential Catholicity* can then only be ascertained, when the Principal Guardian of that Catholicity has been fully instructed, to enforce nothing *ungently*, which is in itself *unnecessary*.

I make these concluding observations in the most unfeigned spirit of Peace, and desire of concord; earnest only that that excellent maxim may come into perfect operation. *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas.*

FINIS.

